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"I am a man: I deem nothing alien to me that  
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DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?



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Do  
*Fundamentalists*  
*Play Fair?*

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1926

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## FOREWORD

Watching children at their games, you will frequently hear some one cry out, "No fair!" Thereupon there may follow an argument, but when the point is clearly made and sustained by the group of players the offender must conform to the rules or get out of the game. It is most interesting to note that expulsion is seldom necessary. Children may often disobey or take liberties with rules imposed upon them by their elders. But with their own rules, whose reasonableness or necessity they recognize, they rarely trifle.

No Fair regulations are of three general kinds although they are all in the single interest of fair play. Some of them are inherited, established regulations for the game being played. They come along with the game, just as the unwritten law of its season does, and are no more to be questioned. No Fair hunching in marbles. No Fair hitting the butt of the other fellow's egg with the point of yours in egg-picking. No Fair shoving your ball with your mallet in croquet.

Other rules are adopted for the particular occasion and may vary every time the game is played. No Fair hiding in the house when hide-and-seek is being played in the yard. No Fair running into

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the neighbor's yard when playing police-and-criminals. Next evening the rules may be revised and a wider range accorded.

Yet other restrictions may arise from the nature of the case, being inherently right or wrong. No Fair moving or laughing if you are playing corpse and funeral. No Fair peeping when you are It in hide and seek. No Fair tripping up another runner in a race. No Fair biting in a fight.

It is all very simple and very potent in child-world. Fine training it is for later life in grown-up world. And it is in the hope of getting a recognition and application of the No Fair rules in the sphere of religious discussion and controversy that these pages are written. They are primarily for the benefit of those on the religious side of the current controversies, because the writer trains with that crowd. He wants religion to be victorious. But he knows that victory in violation of No Fair rules is defeat in any sphere, and particularly in religion. He wants religion to be in good repute among those who are without, as the Scripture says church officers should be. Some of the rules may be those coming down from the past, merely in the interest of getting somewhere in the conflict. Some may be only temporary rules of the game agreed upon. Some may be the deep-rooted principles of eternal right and truth. No matter; they should all be honestly observed, or we should get out of the game.

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## FOREWORD

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It is now a heated and strenuous game. Added to all the perennial contest between sect and sect in the church, and religion and irreligion in the world, we have the new game in the church between fundamentalist and modernist, and in the world, between religionist and scientist. Whether the game is new, or just an old one coming back after having been long in disuse, it should be played under the same old rules of fairness that we all observed in our childhood. The church, the Bible, God will be shamed if any smallest degree of trickery or meanness be allowed to enter into the contest. Fair play! "A fair exchange now, as the children say!"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> II Cor. vi.13, *A New Translation*, James Moffatt.





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## *Do Fundamentalists Play Fair?*

### CHAPTER I

#### NO FAIR ANTI-EVOLUTION ONLY

It is clear enough to any honest interpreter of the Bible that its statements leave no place for the evolutionary theory of the origin of life. Neither Genesis nor the much more ancient Babylonian account of creation from which it is copied ever dreamed of such a thing. Whether made before any other form of life whatever, as the second chapter of Genesis asserts, or made on the sixth day of the creative week after all other forms of life, as the first chapter declares, man was created instantly by the immediate fiat of God. So every Bible writer from Genesis to Revelation believed. There was no slightest chance of his holding any other view, the state of Semitic thought being what it was. The Tennessee court was unquestionably right in holding any theory of evolution contrary to the Bible. Any scientific evidence, or testimony of any biblical expert attempting to prove the contrary, had the trial judge admitted it, would have led to the branding of the witness as foolish or false. If competent to testify, such witness might well have been indicted for perjury. If incompetent, there was no place for his drivel in so serious a case.

If, then, American states are determined to ban

any theory of the origin of life which contradicts the Bible, they may as well pass their laws just as rapidly as their several legislatures can meet. But it is No Fair to treat one hypothesis of a single science that way. They should ban every science in the same fashion, for every science is in opposition to the Bible.

No Fair banning evolution without also prohibiting the whole of Biology of which that explanation of the origin of life is a part. Because the Bible gives so few details of the creation of life, a tricky harmonist or a dishonest special pleader might make some show of getting evolution in. But when that same Genesis tells us that Jacob did Laban out of all the best of the increase of his flocks by having the strongest of them breed spotted and streaked lambs and kids, by the simple device of having them look at spotted and streaked sticks while breeding, what becomes of the famous Mendelian law? That law is no theory, but a fact proved myriads of times with plants, animals, and men, since its discovery and formulation by the pious Roman Catholic priest whose name it bears. Or if it be rejoined that for the very laudable purpose of enabling Jacob, the Hebrew, to profit at the expense of Laban, the Syrian, the Almighty suspended that law of nature and had things happen as Genesis relates, in spite of such No Fair rejoinder, Biology must nevertheless go.

The law of Moses classes both hare and coney as ruminants whereas they are classed by the biologist as rodents. Jesus declared the mustard seed to be

the smallest of all seeds, although various smaller seeds are known. If scientists are permitted to contradict Moses and Christ on matters of plain fact within the range of any ordinary man's observation, we may as well have done with laws against hypotheses about which most American legislators and jurors never dreamed before July, 1925.

No Fair banishing evolution from the schools without casting out Geology with it. The testimony of the rocks is against a world made in six days. Even if they could be shown to mean not days but geologic periods of almost infinite length, that would help little. No one dreamed of regarding them as other than days of twenty-four hours each until cowardly scientists and theologians needed to do so to avoid a conflict with facts, for seven of them made a Jewish week whose last day was the Sabbath. But, anyway, Geology knows nothing of any such sharply defined periods with no overlapping. Quite as little does it know of such an order of appearance for the successive stages of life as Genesis gives in its first chapter, to say nothing of the much more preposterous order of the next chapter. Nor can any geologist find a place within historic time for such a world-embracing flood as Noah's. No respect for the statements of Genesis may be expected among pupils who are taught the elements of Geology.

No Fair banishing evolution from the schools and leaving Astronomy to queen it there. The nature of the biblical universe is clear and simple.

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## *DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?*

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The earth was made as a flat body whose four corners were supported by pillars going down through the waters that were around it and under it. Then a canopy or firmament overarched it, with waters pent above it for rain and floods. Four days after this, all vegetable life having meanwhile appeared, various lights were placed in the firmament, the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to rule the night. Thereafter the lights revolved around the earth, or appeared below the firmament when in use, and were at other times behind the scenes, above the firmament, ready for their next entrance. They were all very beautiful, but quite insignificant compared with the great flat earth which extended equal distances in every direction from Jerusalem which was at the center. The firmament was only a little way up, and might have been reached from the top of the tower of Babel if Jehovah had not prevented the completion of that ambitious building. To stop the movements of sun and moon across the firmament was as simple as for a man to stop moving a lamp. The Almighty did it when Joshua at the battle of Bethhoron needed a long day to complete the slaughter of the people whose country he had invaded with the avowed purpose of killing every man, woman, and child in it, so that his tribes could settle there. It was equally easy to open the windows of heaven and let the waters above the firmament pour down and drown all the inhabitants of the earth except Noah's family.

To teach Astronomy in the face of all this is the

height of folly if the science of Scripture is to be revered. The sun is the center of our system and existed for millions of years before our earth was whirled from it into space where it has ever since revolved. The earth is a round ball which moves around the sun. The "firmament" is limitless space where every star is a sun and every sun the center of a vast system of worlds, all thousands of millions of miles removed. To stop the sun to help out Joshua would be impossible, as it does not move with reference to the earth; to stop the earth would destroy it and probably dislocate the whole solar system. Flat earth with its four pillars, Sheol down under it as the abode of departed spirits, solid firmament, windows of heaven, waters above the sky, little lights moved about there for our convenience—Astronomy lays its sacreligious hands upon them and they wither and pass away. Were not churchmen in the days of Galileo right in silencing his infidel jabber? What do the defenders of the faith mean by allowing such antisciptural rubbish to be taught our youth to-day? Has the mantle of faithful, honest Bre'r John Jasper fallen upon no fearless prophet to-day who will proclaim the biblical truth that the sun do move?

But time and space alike would fail to show the full measure of the iniquity of all the other sciences. Philology contradicts the story of the confusion of tongues at Babel, and proves the biblical etymologies childish derivations based upon sound. Psychology takes man's intellect out of his reins or kidneys and puts it in his brains and his compas-

sion out of his bowels. Medicine depends no longer upon Jeremiah's balm in Gilead nor James' anointing oil, nor the Good Samaritan's wine and oil poured into open wounds. One and all the sciences have contradicted God's word, have pried into secrets and mysteries of his, have dared to do things which he alone had power to do in Bible times, and have thereby robbed the Bible of the place it once held as the infallible guide to all knowledge. And now, to have defenders of the faith let them all go on unchallenged except poor little evolution—No Fair!





## CHAPTER II

### NO FAIR REPUDIATING USHER

James Usher, who was born in 1581 and died in 1656, was one of the greatest scholars of his age. He was an Episcopal clergyman, and for years he rendered distinguished service to his church in his native Ireland, rising from priest to bishop, and archbishop. We are not concerned with his career or writings except to remark that the one was notable, the other voluminous. It was during the years 1650 to 1654 that he published his masterpiece, a work on the biblical chronology that has immortalized him. Written in Latin, as learned works were wont to be, it bore the title—*Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti*. Upon it he lavished an amount of painstaking labor such as is rare among ecclesiastics, though necessary and commonplace among scientists. It soon became an accepted authority for biblical dates. Those dates have long been a part of the English Bible, being printed in the marginal columns bearing references in all the regular editions of the King James Version. These dates seem first to have been printed there in 1701 in a fine edition that the learned William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, and then of Worcester, brought out at the instigation of Archbishop Tenison and the request of Convocation.

The edition was in three large folio volumes, printed in London "by Charles Bill and the Executrix of Thomas Newcomb deceased."

Usher's dates were long ago abandoned by biblical critics who reconstructed the Old Testament by processes of the Higher Criticism and thereby got themselves soundly berated by all the orthodox. To this day it is counted a shameful thing among the lovers of soundness that scholars should prefer the chronologies of heathen Babylonians, Assyrians, and Egyptians to the inspired chronology of the Hebrews, albeit the biblical chronology is selfcontradictory and otherwise in confusion. But there is no element of unfairness in the abandonment of Usher by modern scholarship, because the rules of the game they play expressly provide for that course.

The case is otherwise with the defenders of the Bible against science and other modern heresies. They proceed upon the assumption that the biblical data respecting the time of Old Testament events are precisely as stated in their Bibles. From creation to Noah's flood is a definite period of years. You have but to add together the ages of the successive patriarchs to get that period. Add to that one week, or, strictly, six days, which had elapsed from the creation of the universe to the creation of Adam, and you have the precise length of time from creation to flood. Working down from Noah to Abraham, to Moses, to David, and so on to Christ, you can tell to a nicety the dates of flood and creation in years before Christ. Now that is

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## NO FAIR REPUDIATING USHER

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exactly what Archbishop Usher did, bringing to bear upon his task the erudition and patience of which he was master.

There is but one honest way of escape from Usher's dates for the man who takes the Bible, just as it is written, as his final authority. Even that is not open to the defender of the English Bible. For others, appeal might be made from the Hebrew text from which our Bible was translated to the old Samaritan Bible of the fifth century B. C., or the old Greek Bible of the second century B. C. Taking the data furnished in those three ancient Bibles in the fifth and eleventh chapters of Genesis there is found a wide divergence. From creation to flood in the Hebrew is 1656 years; in the Samaritan, 1307; in the Greek, 2242. From the flood to Abraham in the Hebrew is 290 years; in the Samaritan, 940; in the Greek, 1170. When it comes to taking the Bible just as it is written, or, for those who claim to do so, to taunting scientists and ancient historians for lack of agreements as to remote dates, we have here a plain case of No Fair. For the pot to call the kettle black is not unto edification, and hence is no Christian exercise. What is written on this subject in those three ancient versions of the same Bible cannot be made to agree. Nor without the patient application of the modern biblical criticism which every one hundred percent. orthodox person despises, there is no way to tell which of the three most probably represents the original reading. There is no Hebrew text in existence earlier than the

tenth Christian century, whereas the Samaritan was derived from the Hebrew in the fifth, and the Greek in the second century before our era. If you get your date from the few surviving Samaritans, it is one thing. If you get it from the millions of Greek Catholics, it is another thing. If you get it from the Jews, or the Roman Catholics, or the Protestants, whose Bibles follow the Hebrew text, you get a third thing. The one hundred percenter cannot decide, but must blindly follow whichever Bible he happens to live under. The modern scholar knows the Hebrew text probably represents what was originally written in the Bible, but he also knows that whichever of the three chronologies you back because it is in your Bible, you will certainly be supporting what can by no possibility be true.

Archbishop Usher followed the data of the Hebrew, and if he were alive to-day he would have to do the same if he wanted to state what the best text of the Bible says on the subject. He thus found that the creation of the universe according to Genesis was in the year 4004 B. C. and that the flood came in 2349 B. C. Being an honest man with no ugly facts of modern Geology to tempt him to be otherwise, he let the Bible tell its own story, and it said that all the time from the beginning of the whole created universe to the day when Cain was born, after Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden, was one year. You have but to look at the Genesis dates in any reference Bible of the King James Version and you will see at the

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## NO FAIR REPUDIATING USHER

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head of chapter one, "Before Christ 4004," and at the head of chapter four, "Before Christ 4003." And you have but to put out of your mind all the antibiblical notions you have allowed modern science to foist upon you, and read your Bible with honesty and intelligence to see that Usher was right. In the same fashion, you can see that the infallible record of Genesis tells that in 2349 B. C., as Usher has accurately figured out the inspired data, all previous civilization was totally destroyed from the whole surface of the earth. A year later all life and history began anew from the germs of it saved in Noah's ark.

When confronted by the facts of Astronomy testifying that the beginning of the universe must have been inconceivable eons and ages ago, do you answer that any statement to the contrary drawn from the Bible is based upon Ushers uninspired figures? When faced by the record of the rocks demonstrating that the very modern part of the universe known as the earth must have been hurled off the sun untold millions of years ago, do you say that Usher and not the inspired writer of Genesis is responsible for any conflicting view? When Biology tells of the long path of life from simple cell to man, and Anthropology adds the ages from the first man up to any such man as Adam, do you blame the one day from animal to man, and the four days from primitive vegetation to highest animal, on Usher? When history, plainly written in human speech and read by the scholars of the world, reveals several ancient civil-

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## DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?

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izations antedating the time of the flood by thousands of years do you lay the flood date of 2349 B. C. at the door of Usher?

No Fair! For shame! Usher is the Bible, and the Bible is Usher so far as those dates are concerned. And if you desert both, under the attacks of those who accept neither, and flee to the few added hundreds of years of the Greek Bible it will profit you nothing. Those extra years are of no account in the face of a discrepancy so vast. The Greek Jews probably juggled their figures to try to make the Bible plausible to their heathen neighbors, as you are now trying to jockey yours into accord with your scientific neighbors. If your contention is false, forsake it; if it is true, defend it. But in the name of common honesty don't try to keep the credit for taking the Bible absolutely as it is written, and also gain the advantage of holding with modern knowledge. Don't profess to believe the data from which honest old Archbishop Usher got his chronology and then throw him to the wolves when his figures are challenged. And don't espouse the Restoration hoax of many theologians who are yet to learn what fair play is. They profess to be able to save the face of Genesis and Usher and themselves by claiming that a gap of eons and ages yawns between the first and second verses of the Bible; that all the records of ancient life found in the rocks were buried there after verse one; that all from verse two on is the story of a reconstruction of the earth's surface and a re-creation of life after some geologic cataclysm

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## *NO FAIR REPUDIATING USHER*

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had buried the life of the vast ages before. An honest ignoramus is much more admirable than an intellectual coward. Ignorance may have both honesty and piety; harmonistic cowardice can have neither. Choose between Genesis and Usher on the one side, and science and history on the other. You cannot have both, and Genesis without Usher is No Fair.





## CHAPTER III

### NO FAIR DENOUNCING ASSUMPTIONS

Orthodox religion has always loudly protested against the guesses, theories, and unproved assumptions of scientists and philosophers. Refusing to examine patiently the evidence which has satisfied science that evolution is a fact, its recent opponents have swept it all aside as a guess. But even if it were granted that organic evolution is an unproved hypothesis, religion has no right to object to it on that score. Nor is it fair, under the rules of the game that religion has elected to play, to object to any theological or philosophical theories that are the outcome of a cross between science and religion.

The creation and the flood stories are manifestly products of just such theories of scientific men trying to express in religious phraseology their speculations about observed natural phenomena. The whole of the early chapters of Genesis and other portions of the Bible are the conclusions of science-theologians of ancient times. Where did the phenomenal universe come from? In what order did life appear? What was the origin of a sense of sin? Why do men wear clothes? Wherefore the pangs of childbirth? How explain the toil of man in a world so prolific in thorns and thistles, so niggardly in food plants? Whence arose the ancient strife be-

tween the roving herdsman and the settled tiller of the soil? How account for the diverse and divisive languages of humanity?

You can readily see the phenomena which prompted those questions in primitive society. The men who studied the facts and reached conclusions from them were proto-scientists. Those who brought the results of their research and speculation into relation with religion were science-theologians. The best of such conclusions among Semitic thinkers were preserved in such stories as are in our Bible. Hence the lover of the Bible should be the last man in the world to decry the observations of science, the speculations arising therefrom, and their expression in religious parlance. Nor should he condemn the metaphysical religio-scientist because his speculations prove to be wrong. He has but to face the actual statements made in Scripture by the early forerunners of such men to see that they were always wrong. He has but to answer the questions given above in the exact words of Holy Writ to demonstrate that every single answer flies in the face of all modern knowledge. How utterly unfair, therefore, to deny modern observers the very privilege that, of old, produced the Book that is being defended.

The Bible writers also made use of the philosophical theories of their time in the service of religion. The single case of the use of the famous *logos* theory of Greek speculation will prove the point. There it stands, written large, in the very forefront of the most revered of all the Gospels.

Where did the writer get it? and what use did he make of it? Certainly not from any other writer of Scripture was it obtained. Just as surely it originated in the metaphysics of ancient theorists concerning God and his universe. Herakleitus, Zeno, Plato, Philo-Judaeus, and John are the links in the chain, the last two having brought the Stoic doctrine into relation with Jewish and Christian theology. And the use made of it in the Gospel was boldly to identify the *logos* of philosophy with the Messiah of theology, and claim that both were Jesus of Nazareth. Nobody ever proved the existence of the Greek *logos*, or of the late Jewish *logos*, or of the early Christian *logos*. It was one of the assumptions of philosophy pressed into the service of religion. After this in the very Bible itself, to say nothing of all the Greek speculation in the sacred Nicene and Athanasian creeds of the church, it is rather late for orthodoxy to shout down modern users of unproved theories in religious thinking.

Whom then are we to condemn? Spinoza, for assuming that matter is self-existent, eternal, uncreatable, indestructible, merely because all that is unproved theory? Do we prove the Hebrew assumption of the creation of the universe out of nothing? Have we *demonstrated* that matter can be called into existence or destroyed by God?

It is complained that scientists were not present at creation, did not witness the origins of life or of species. But who did? Certainly not any theologian, however ancient he or his views may be. Schools of evolutionists may say that living matter

appeared upon the earth from other planets, or stars, or arose spontaneously from inorganic matter. They may claim that it began by assembling the essential elements of life—oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon—which were drawn together by a new form of attraction in a state of suspension when the earth offered favorable conditions of heat and twilight, and that the primitive organisms thus arising carried with them special ferments insuring the development of higher organisms. Call it theory and point out that it may be godless, but do not damn it on the ground of its being unproved assumption. Religion, like science and philosophy, has to begin with tremendous assumptions.

If your theory of the origin of the Bible tells you the Genesis account of the creation of the universe out of nothing, and of life and its orders by direct interposition of God is true, can you not see that you are as much in the grip of hypothesis as is the materialistic or atheistic evolutionist? You have started with the unprovable assumption that God told someone exactly how he made the universe, and that person wrote it down from God's dictation, and that it has been transmitted to us in Genesis. You may believe it, but you can no more prove it than the scientist can prove how he got the original cell of life. If it is incredible to you that the universe has existed from all eternity, or at some point in time spontaneously sprang into existence, do not believe it. But humbly remember that when you reject a godless universe you have not escaped the iron grip of assumption. You have fled

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## *DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?*

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from an eternally self-existent universe to an eternally self-existent God, and the only bridge making such a flight possible has been an unproved and unprovable theory. The only difference is that the scientist may have constructed his hypothesis himself, while you have accepted yours ready-made from your religious teachers, as they, in turn, have accepted it from theirs for generations and generations. Why not play fair with our opponents?

Nor is it otherwise with the end of life than with its beginning. Some assume that death ends all; others, that it is the portal to immortality. As yet those who claim to have demonstrated contact with departed spirits are unconvincing. Scripture has its promises, but we cannot verify them. The New Testament has its claims that one, at least, of the innumerable throng shepherded by death returned to the land of the living. But the very assumptions of faith respecting his origin and nature forbid the acceptance of his case as a norm for humanity. That aside, the story of it is in ancient records whose truthfulness and accurate transmission must be assumed, not proved. A fine, heartening assumption, that of immortal life, but an assumption nevertheless. Claim the edge on your opponent who assumes that death ends all. By all means try to get him to take your glorious assumption instead of his gloomy one. But do not seek to discredit him by foul play, as though he guessed and you proved.

The fool who said in his heart, "There is no God," may have been guessing wrong. When you

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## DENOUNCING ASSUMPTIONS

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try to think where God came from, or how so marvelous a First Cause was caused, or Creator was created, or how from eternity he existed without father or mother, or beginning of days or end of life, you appreciate that those who are not fools can do no more than guess right. The venture of faith is a noble venture, and the assumptions supporting it are pillars of character and upholders of courage. They are old and tried and dependable. But they are assumptions, and we are little likely to commend them to a faithless generation by maintaining that nothing but indisputable fact underlies our religion. Attack their assumptions and sweep them away with better, but do not assail their right to assume.





## CHAPTER IV

### NO FAIR BLAMING EVERY EVIL ATTENDING A SYSTEM ON ITS ADVOCATES

It is one of the fundamental principles of Logic that all the accompaniments and consequences of a theory or practice cannot be charged against it with justice. Often harm arises that is more than offset by the good. Commonly evil ensues that is due to abuse. Frequently attendant ills would be present under any and every theory or practice. Because something undesirable follows something else is no proof of causal connection. If a course is followed, or a view advocated by persons obnoxious to us, that is no evidence of the viciousness of the course or the view. A teacher is not to be blamed for false conclusions reached by his pupils if his premises were true. A leader is not responsible for acts of his followers disconnected with his leadership.

We do not refuse to think because many think evil. We continue to breathe, eat, and drink although the most depraved men do the same. Medicines are being made though murderers and suicides will use some of them as poisons. Fires are constantly built despite the destructive power of fire. Electricity is generated notwithstanding many are slain by it. Automobiles are manufactured by the

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## BLAMING A SYSTEM'S EVIL

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million even though they bankrupt many, fill the land with disagreeable noise, aid robbers and thugs, serve as places of assignation and lust, and maim and slay tens of thousands of people. But we are aware we must share the activities and supports of life with others or perish. We must risk foolish and wicked uses of commodities and forces, or lose all the benefits derived therefrom. We recognize that it would be irrational and unfair to blame ills rising from abuse, evils that would exist under any available conditions, and harm counterbalanced by greater good, on the productive and progressive people of the world. Ill-balanced and disgruntled people do so, but we know it to be unfair, and we want to play fair.

Except in religion! Take the case of Darwin. By devoting his life to science he ceased to attend to the rites of religion or exercise his mind upon spiritual themes. That was a great loss to Darwin, as was his loss of power to enjoy music and poetry, which he lamented late in life. However he did a prodigious amount of useful work for humanity, quite apart from formulating certain theories for which he is caluminated by religious people who are generally ignorant of them. He studied soil and crops; taught the value of earthworms in soil production; demonstrated that clover depends on cats—no cats, many field mice, few slugs of wild bees—hence few bees, poor cross fertilization of clover bloom and little clover seed. Multitudes of prosperous Americans without whose moneymaking colleges, learned societies, and churches would

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## *DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?*

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languish, have atrophied their spiritual powers destroying their competitors, monopolizing the goods and opportunities of others, and grubbing for gold. Why not devote a little more energy to rebuking them and a little less to trying to damn the memory of Darwin? If he paid too high a price for serving science is it fair to try to blast him for what all must do who give themselves to great causes?

Take evolution, which is far older, and far younger, and far greater than Darwin. With more or less accuracy, he and others pointed out phases of the struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest. No evolutionist created the struggle in nature, and no observer, however casual or religious, has been able to overlook it. It might be concluded from current outcry that believers in evolution made all nature red in tooth and claw, and wickedly conspired to cause the animals with the strongest teeth and the sharpest claws to possess the earth. Yet the evolutionist does not claim to have created life, he only observes it. If a materialist or mechanist, he may say it all came about of itself. If a theist, he will say that God created it, just as surely, though far less quickly, and much more wonderfully, than the Bible says. And when life became human, despite the age-old and yet continuing brutal strife of man, what evolutionist claims that brutality either does or should survive as the fittest human type? Every high quality of mind and soul enters into the conflict. To the believer in God, whether he be wisest evolutionist, or most ignorant fundamentalist, there is the convic-

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## BLAMING A SYSTEM'S EVIL

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tion that all the spiritual forces of the universe fight on the side of the spiritual qualities of man. If we believe the fittest to survive is the godlike, why not thank the evolutionist for demonstrating that the law of nature is the survival of the fittest? Is it fair to condemn him for adding the testimony of nature to the assurance of your Bible?

But there are Nietzsche, and Prussian militarism, and the World War. Are they not all linked up with belief that the strongest nation has a right to conquer the weak? Did it not all come from evolution and the survival of the fittest?

Certainly not, although it is rare to find an anti-evolutionist talking or writing without making the assertion. It is easy enough to demonstrate that the Prussians made use of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest to prove that only strong states have a right to exist, and that it is their duty to banish weak states from the earth. But they used industry and invention and schools and churches to the same end. And they were militaristic in 1870 when they beat France to her knees, and through all the dealings that made Prussia supreme among the German states, and Germany supreme in central Europe. Also before that Austria and Russia and Turkey had been militaristic. Nor had France and England and Italy awaited the announcement of modern evolutionary theories to carry on many a bitter and cruel war.

Would to God that the belief that might makes right, and that the earth belongs to the robber nations that can grab it and hold it, were no deeper

rooted than modern science or any theories arising therefrom. If Darwin started it with his speculations in the latter part of the nineteenth century it would be easy to overtake it and eradicate it. But from the Cave Man up to the dawn of history, and from then through Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman annals there is one unbroken record of man's inhumanity to man. That is but a single strand of the mighty cable binding humanity to its bloodstained past. Nor has the modern record been less bloody. All that can be said is that the half century during which Darwinism has been somewhat widely known has been marked by a softening of the brutality of war and a hopeful and ever growing effort to put an end to it.

If it is fair to lay the World War at the door of modern evolution because it occurred after its rise and after German philosophers appealed to it in justification of aggression, what is to be said of the responsibility of the Bible and the church for past wars? Were not many of the longest and cruelest wars of the past nineteen centuries religious wars? Were they not frequently led by so-called princes of the church? Or when not directly fought by the church, were not the armies filled with Christians and blessed by the church? If Darwin is to be accursed because some of his followers have used his teaching to justify greed and lust and rapine in war, what can be said of the church of Christ? Even when not swept on by violence in the passionate hate of national strife, what is to be said for the

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church in its work of persecuting to the death its own adherents, both Catholic and Protestant? How long ago was it that priests of rival Christian churches fell to braining one another with their holy vessels on a peaceful Easter morn at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and had to be quelled by the troops of the Moham-medan Turk?

As for the Bible, when a good bishop of the Goths in the fourth century was making a translation of it for his converts he dared not translate the books of Kings because they were filled with war and the Goths were already too warlike. It must have been with much fear and trembling that he gave them Joshua and much more of the Old Testament. What German frightfulness for a moment dared to dream of such savagery as Joshua sets forth in the name of God? Even after well-nigh a millenium of progress yawned between Joshua and Ezekiel, it may be read in the ninth chapter of the latter's book that God commanded men to go through Jerusalem and smite without mercy or pity, killing old men, young men, children, and women. There it stands written in the book whose every word is declared by the orthodox to be the actual command of God. They have always left the door wide open to such horrible warfare by insisting that it was just and right to destroy Canaanites and other sinners in such fashion. The babes and children were potentially, if not actually, guilty of all the iniquities calling for the slaughter of their mothers and fathers. Besides

they all richly merited just such a fate by having participated in the sin of Adam in Eden. What can justice demand of a righteous God but the murder of totally depraved babies?

Does Germany or any other nation where the Bible is regularly read in homes, schools, and churches really need the recondite teachings of a Nietzsche to justify war and frightfulness? Can any legitimate inferences from evolution remotely approximate the explicit commands of the Old Testament in barbarity? What have evolution's teachers ever done but point out the record of strife in nature? They have commanded no one, in God's name, to imitate it or strive to perpetuate it. They have recognized all the higher and nobler qualities of man as the finest fruit of evolution, and have taught that all human advancement, and even much in the lower ranks of life, should go forward under the behests of those noblest powers.

If, then, any nation has perverted the doctrines of evolution to justify conquest, it has added that to its other sins against truth. If the record of red raven in the book of nature teaches man that early advances in the upward march of life were through blood and pain, the Bible teaches the same of faith and religion. If science must cry aloud over its antecedents and consequents, "I have sinned," religion and the church can do no otherwise. If the world is yet filled with most unholy evils, common sense teaches us they were here ages before church, Bible, and Christianity arrived, and cannot lawfully be laid at the door of religion. And com-

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mon fairness decrees that science is no more responsible for modern iniquity than religion is. Both science and religion have come a long way, but they must travel much farther before they can be free from the errors, and half truths, and the consequences of both, that so sadly curse all human institutions and systems. ✓



## CHAPTER V

### NO FAIR PROMOTING SECTIONALISM AND RACIAL HATE IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

For years before the World War conservative religious forces in the United States were organizing to resist, by concerted and ably financed efforts, the progress of biblical research and scientific investigation. By putting these under the headings of Higher Criticism and Materialistic Science the opposition was being justified; but inasmuch as practically all biblical scholarship and all science not subordinated to conservative Bible views were antagonized, it is correct to say that the forces were being marshalled against biblical research and scientific investigation. Ministers of the Gospel can recall how many books on *The Fundamentals* were sent broadcast to all preachers absolutely free. The twelve volumes thus sent out ran to about 3,000,000 copies and all of the many individual papers making up every volume were written by prominent men who, if yet alive, are now known as fundamentalists. The series started in 1909, so that it is evident from that single activity of a big movement that the war delayed and interrupted the program of fundamentalism, rather than created it. Quite likely the violence and bitterness of the recent propaganda are due, partly, to the moral and

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spiritual bankruptcy following in the wake of such a world catastrophe. But the movement antedates the war, and its battle against modern learning was not caused, but only delayed by the war.

During the war not a few of the leaders of the earlier and later phases of the movement were pacifists. They had every right to be such if their consciences so prompted, and the disillusionment of such religious people as the writer over the outcome of a war supported in the hope that it would end all war forbids regarding the term pacifist as an opprobrious epithet. Some of them, then, including the late chief protagonist of fundamentalism, were against the war with Germany, and labored hard to prove that Germany was no more to blame than any other nation, and was guilty of nothing in prosecuting the war that justified our wrath against her. It is easy to recall that their efforts to keep the peace with Germany at any price led to the pacifists in many pulpits being denounced as pro-German. The acts that roused America to fury were denied, or softened, or justified in an effort to allay the demand for war.

This bit of history has been recalled for the purpose of noting a contrast. Attention has already been directed to the fact that fundamentalists profess to believe that evolution as taught in Germany caused the war. Obviously the purpose is to take advantage of the war-begotten hatred of Germany to discredit evolution as taught in America. Of a piece with that unfairness is the effort to array that hate against all scientific and biblical scholarship

which will not bow the knee to the great gods of fundamentalism. We now constantly hear and read of the poison gas of German radicalism, of the frightfulness of German rationalism. All results of the higher criticism of Scripture are branded, "Made in Germany." Hymns of Hate and the subserviency of the German pulpit to the war lords are solemnly charged to the account of modern science and its ability to deaden the conscience. Germany and all its people are declared to have fallen in the original sin of the nation in departing from the Protestant doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible. All nations and peoples are solemnly warned that they shall all likewise perish if they do not renounce Germany and all her materialistic science, and all her biblical criticism, and flee for refuge into the fundamentalist ark.

The folly of such an unchristian course should be apparent to everyone. If Germany has taught us, or if we have stolen from her, secrets of coal-tar dyeing and other arts, do we refuse to use them? If she has potash and other useful minerals, do we decline to avail ourselves of them? If her manufactures are needed by the world, shall they not be bought? Because Gluck, Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and Wagner came out of Germany are we to shut our ears to all the ravishing harmonies their souls have uttered? Martin Luther, and therefore the good and bad of Protestantism, are German. Are we to cast them into outer darkness?

Unchristian it necessarily is to promote or per-

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petuate national hatreds by appeals to religious prejudices. The Bible has never been narrowly national since Christianity took hold of it. The church is supposed to be universal. Christ certainly was not made in America. Bible, church, and Christ cannot be served or saved by national suspicion. All three owe much to Germany and doubtless will yet owe much more. The radicalism and rationalism in Luther that the church of his day so bitterly cursed now stand among the choicest treasures of America. Wagner's revolutionary innovations in music are now established and conservative things. Neither all of science nor all of biblical criticism arose in Germany. Such a part of them as did originate there makes us debtor to Germany. Accept or reject nothing because of its origin. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. No falsity is less false because promoted by American fundamentalists; no truth less true because first proclaimed by German liberals.

Probably no one will question that current fundamentalism and anti-evolution have their chief stronghold in the southern states. The West is said to foster much of the same thing, but not to the same degree, not with whole denominations throughout state after state unitedly and unvaryingly fundamentalist. But whatever the facts that a careful religious census might bring to light, the South certainly loudly proclaims itself as the leading, if not the only, orthodox region in Christendom.

Its homogeneity is easily explained. Slavery kept

foreigners out in the old days, negro labor has largely done so since. Defeat drove it in upon itself and left it hostile to influences originating elsewhere. Arrested development in many respects inevitably resulted, particularly in so conservative a field as religion. This was the more pronounced because the three denominations enrolling the vast majority of southern people broke away from the corresponding northern churches in ante-bellum days, and have ever since maintained their isolation. They are also the denominations most conspicuously fundamentalist throughout the nation.

Again a bit of history connected with the bitter hatreds of a war has been recalled to make clear one of the evils of the current religious controversy. Southern fundamentalism is now sedulously stirring up ancient sectionalism in the interests of a rigid orthodoxy. Nothing is commoner than to hear the assertion that all other regions are honey-combed with liberalism. In the South alone is the Simon-pure orthodoxy to be found in all its pristine perfection. Elsewhere Yankee perversity, and German rationalism, and Irish Catholicism, and New England Unitarianism, and Oriental Pantheism have formed unholy blends which the vast wealth of North and West has decided to put in the place of Bible religion. The South has been kept free from this, in the providence of God, that it may now save the church. Sermons, convention speeches, newspaper correspondence, tracts, pamphlets, and books maintain all this. Lads from church colleges and seminaries repeat it. Thus a

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great region, large enough to be a powerful nation, that once nearly succeeded in becoming such, is now glorying in its shame—the shame of sectionalism, backwardness, ignorance, smugness, and self-righteousness.

As though it was not unholy enough to join together two such pitiful things as sectionalism and religious prejudice in the name of Christ, a further evil is being wrought. In the nature of the case, denominations that divided on questions growing out of slavery and states' rights should long ago have united again. More than half a century after the strife ended, should churches be the only element refusing to be reconciled? should Christianity be the only unforgiving factor? Division was no necessity of the situation originally, as is proclaimed by the fact that two denominations did not split, and have worked in harmony ever since. One was the Episcopal Church, aristocratic and episcopal in government; the other the Disciples, democratic and congregational in government. What ought never to have been, but came to be in times that tried men's souls, is now being perpetuated by appeals to race prejudice, sectionalism, and fundamentalism. A publication is at hand wherein a leading bishop seeks to arouse resistance to the proposal to unite the northern and southern divisions of his church by stressing the claim that southern purity of faith will be tainted and destroyed if it merges with its northern counterpart. And another bishop has been quoted as opposing

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union from fear of negro bishops being imposed upon the South by the North.

The writer's father served the South throughout its struggle, although he had to come from a border state beyond the Confederate lines to do so. He confesses to a full share of southern convictions and prejudices on the race question and other matters. He has deep sympathy with the old Confederate chaplain who is said to have begun his prayers, "O God, the God of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Jefferson Davis." Those heroes were in every way much more worthy to be associated with God than were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who are so frequently mentioned in prayer. But truth is truth, and religion is religion, and neither should be prostituted to base uses. And sectionalism, racial antipathy, and self-righteousness have no fellowship with Christ. If he could disregard the wall between Jew and Samaritan in his day, if Paul could proclaim that in Christ all distinctions of race, nation, sex, social position, culture, and language had been abolished, the cause is a bad one that strengthens itself today by setting against one another German and American, northerner and southerner, black and white. There must be fairer ways of settling all pending questions between religious conservatives and liberals.





## CHAPTER VI

### NO FAIR THE LAW IN THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

Christianity is properly a religion of the spirit. It does not need, and should not use any external authority or force to propagate itself or resist its rivals. As heir to the best that Judaism produced it claims to realize the ideal of Jeremiah, that of a religion neither having nor needing law because all its adherents are regulated by inner principles. Deriving directly from Christ, inwardness and spiritual guidance displace the commands of any law however venerable and revered. Commended by Paul, it is free from the law and under faith and grace.

But it early began to barter its birthright for a mess of pottage in the shape of aid from external forms, restraints, and prohibitions. While Christ laid down no laws, but taught only principles, and Paul, at his best, declared that to the extent that a man did anything because coerced by law he ceased to be Christian, the latter fell back upon law for the regulation of the very imperfect Christians of his day. Then, with the coming of a Christian emperor in the fourth century, the church began an age-long bondage to the state with its laws and force. It seemed so restful after having endured

three centuries of buffeting by Roman power. It seemed so swift after the slow processes of persuasion and conversion. It seemed so effective after the many troubles with heresy.

From then till now Christianity has been in bondage. State churches are under the dominion of secular power. Legalistic and militaristic methods and means remain dominant in churches even when in no formal union with the state. Even in America where such unchurchly men as Jefferson established the freedom of the state from the church, neither state nor church has been free. Crude efforts to force religion upon others by fine, imprisonment, and torture, such as were resorted to in colonial days, were outlawed. But American codes abound in Sabbath laws, and the like, that are the voice of the church commanding people what to do, and using the power of the state to make them do it. Laws exist, and others are pending, to compel the reading of the Bible every day to all the pupils of the public schools. At the command of the church, states are banning scientific teaching believed to be injurious to the church. Sometimes it is done by enactment of the legislature. Oftener it is done by rule of the state boards of education, usually headed by the governor of the state.

While professing to preserve neutrality and give no unfair advantage to irreligion, such actions are manifestly designed to support the particular religious views of those prompting them. It is unthinkable that the bigotry trying to destroy religious schools by compelling all children to go to the

public schools has any regard for any beliefs but its own. Imagine a minority of Mohammedans in any state where fundamentalist laws are made getting something prohibited from the schools because it is in opposition to the Koran. Picture a group of Christian Scientists, in any American state where they are hopelessly outvoted, trying to get the legislature to forbid the teaching of modern medicine because it discredits Mrs. Eddy's *Key to Scripture*, and the Bible as they understand it. Yet the Christian Scientists of any state which taxes all the people to support medical schools and hospitals have as much right to have it all stopped as a group of fundamentalists have to stop the teaching of evolution. They can claim that if the truth about the sin of thinking yourself sick, and the folly of relying upon doctors instead of God is not to be taught at public expense, the least to be asked is that the state shall not teach the reality of disease and the value of doctors. Palpably, both what the state prohibits, and what it commands, the church is dictating.

The bondage of religion to law goes much further than that. The church has only very slowly won a very small minority of men to the acceptance of Christ's ideals by implanting right principles within them. Discouraged and impatient because of long deferred hopes, it turns from true morality to legal morality. What Catholics did in forcing conquered nations to enter the church, what the Protestants did in compelling natives of the East Indies to embrace Christianity, is only a

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kind of material picture of what is going on now. Getting people to love temperance and sobriety proved too slow. Therefore the church went into politics, manned an organization with preachers diverted from the work of preaching the gospel, and enacted a law to prohibit drinking. Thereupon it began to discover that even the armed might of the United States cannot make the nation love soberness, nor keep men from getting drunk until they do love soberness. Now it is working valiantly to preach the love of temperance because it is the law, whereas it is a much more Christian procedure to preach temperance because it is right, law or no law.

Similarly with the evils of divorce, the church is turning more and more to law. Long ago it interpreted the teaching of Christ on divorce as a law, although it is only a principle and an illustration. Then it laid down various laws of its own in different denominations. Now it is clamoring for state and national laws. The trouble, however, is within men and women where no law can reach. Unless their hearts be changed to love one another and set the good of their children above lust and wanton caprice, their homes will be hell, their physical union a blasphemy against marriage. The task of the church is not to try to perpetuate such homes and unions by law. It is to bring to bear the constraining love of Christ in their lives. Where that rules, ideal marriage is possible with no law whatever save for the purpose of record and inheritance.

The trouble in all these matters, here educed

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merely as illustrations of a principle, is that religious people lose sight of the reality chasing shadows. Uniform divorce laws are all right, but they cannot touch the heart of the evil. Prohibition laws are a necessity to protect society from the liquor business and its outrages. But the church loses all moral and spiritual perspective when it tries to gain its ends by law instead of by persuasion. The laws fail until the great majority are brought to the place where they need no law. And it is at least a fair question for Christians to consider whether Christ was not wiser than they in attending to the persuasion, and letting the laws attend to themselves.

Where might Christianity now be if it had adhered to the inwardness and spiritual control of Christ? What might the church now be if it had not taken refuge under the shadow of Constantine, and had never put its confidence in an arm of flesh? To what heights of temperance and chastity might nineteen centuries of Christianity have raised humanity if all the energies devoted to driving them, and coercing them, and prohibiting them, and cursing them had been passionately poured out in winning them to Christ?

As for laws forcing people to respect church and Bible, they insult our religion. The church of the glorified Christ? the Word of the living God? and yet we must appeal to wrangling legislatures of petty politicians to protect them! Through all his life Jesus never invoked any law against any man. He violated the laws of his day and of ours at

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times. He challenged men to enforce the law against an outcast woman if they dared. He suffered shame and death under Jewish law and Roman law. But he stopped no question, or argument, or attack by any law, human or divine. Nor has God, so far as heard from up to the time of this writing, found it necessary to compel any man by law and force to believe anything.

Choose law, or choose the spirit. You cannot have both. If you elect to rely upon law for your own and the world's salvation you are no longer under grace. Legal morality, religion by power and might, and not by the Spirit, have been the bane of the church. False brethren, privily spying upon others and invoking the law as the bulwark of salvation, are to-day as surely laboring to impose a yoke of bondage and destroy the liberty we have in Christ as were the legalists of Paul's day. No Fair claiming the freedom of a religion of the spirit while relying upon the law to compel righteousness or prevent opposition.





## CHAPTER VII

### NO FAIR DESERTING OUR BIBLE FOR INFALLIBLE AUTOGRAPHS

When American legislatures pass laws against criticizing or discrediting the Bible they mean the common, or King James Version of the Bible. Many English speaking people are unaware of the existence of any other. If aware, everything ever taught them of biblical infallibility has led them to the natural conclusion that our current Bible is a perfect copy of the original, inerrant Bible in Hebrew and Greek. Ministers continue to preach on texts that were left out of the Revised Version thirty-five years ago as no part of the Word of God, even when tested by the exceedingly conservative textual criticism of that day. The very latest fundamentalist journals are now quoting passages of Scripture as mistranslated in the classical version, when the correct rendering of the Revised would disprove the very point in question.

The first line of defense of biblical infallibility is thus seen to be the common English Bible. The people are taught that every word in it is inspired. It is the volume usually thumped by the preacher when he declares he believes every word in it just as it is written. He siezes that very book and shakes it in the face of his congregation when he

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defies scientists or others to point out one single error in it, from cover to cover. But when not in the pulpit where it would be irreverent for anyone to answer them, or in the denominational press where it is seldom possible to answer them, such defenders of inerrancy soon abandon their first line trenches. Bad grammar, erroneous translations, occasional verses that even the most hardened conservative cannot longer deny to be late interpolations, are easily shown to any English reader who can be induced to look at any modern edition. Yesterday learned books were written to prove that the clearest trinitarian text in the New Testament was written there by the Holy Spirit, and anyone questioning it was shouted down as a Unitarian. Today it is admitted that Erasmus in 1527 put in I John v.7 with its reference to the three heavenly witnesses, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, because he lost a bet, and had not the courage to stand by his scholarship. Yesterday religious fanaticism was denouncing the Revised Version and its departures from the Received Text as worse for faith in the Bible than all the assaults of infidels. To-day they have given up that battle and are denouncing other things with as little reason or effect.

The second line of defense of an infallible Bible is the Hebrew Old Testament, and the Greek New Testament. They lie back of our English Bibles in the languages wherein the Holy Spirit originally inspired men. Difficulties of mistranslation are easily disposed of thus; passages not belonging to the

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Bible are not in critical original texts. They are not as handy to thump and shake and quote as our English Bible. They cannot be relied upon to convince plain people who have been carefully taught to suspect critical scholarship. But in a pinch, the Scriptures in the original may be resorted to when contending with enemies of a faultless Bible.

However, the position can be rendered untenable in a serious battle. On an appeal to the Greek New Testament it is discovered that its manuscripts differ so radically that they have to be grouped in four well-marked families. Which family will you adopt as giving the correct text? True to its history of always taking the wrong position, to the damage of faith, and never leaving it until driven out by scholarship, conservatives took the wrong family. The Received Text was carelessly derived from a few faulty manuscripts of the latest and worst of the four groups of Greek Testaments. But any one taken has its faults. If you decide to take them all as representing the total testimony as to inspired Scripture you will find that they contain from 150,000 to 200,000 different readings. That is, they will average six different answers to every verse in the New Testament when you ask them just what are the infallible words of God. Rather bad for fundamentalism, even though most of the divergencies are of slight consequence to scholars.

Matters are less mixed in the Hebrew manuscripts, though really less satisfactory to scholarship. There is one type of text, hence practically no vari-

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ous readings. Yet Textual Criticism, that is the Lower, not the devil-begotten Higher Criticism, points out many errors of transmission, both intentional and inadvertent corruptions. Worse far than all such errors, however, are the things lying clear beyond the reach of Textual Criticism as solid parts of the Bible in the original and all of the translations. Divergences and contradictions are of that sort in parallel accounts of the same events. They lie in both Testaments, sometimes in one book, sometimes in two, or five or six. Even when merely circumstantial variations with substantial agreement they are fatal to infallibility which must have absolute inerrancy. The case is hopeless when, for example, the first and second chapters of Genesis are honestly compared, the mixed facts and figures of the flood story are collated, or when the years from the death of Solomon to the revolution of Jehu are given in terms of the kings of both Judah and Israel, and differ by three years.

Worse even than this to a defender of a Bible all equally the absolute Word of God and of the same value in all its parts, are the ignorance of elementary facts of science, the contradictions of contemporary history, the savage and immoral laws, and the primitive religious conceptions. All of which fundamentalism denies, or harmonizes, or charges to miraculous intervention, or divine wisdom beyond human comprehension. But when strongly assaulted by solid learning which cannot be confused or intimidated as simple believers may, defense of the Bible in the original tongues is aban-

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done as defense of the English Bible was earlier.

The third line of defense of a perfectly errorless Bible is the original autograph manuscripts as they left the hands of their inspired writers. They were in Greek, but they were three centuries older than our most ancient existing manuscripts. They were in Hebrew, but written by the hand of Moses, or David or the prophets, from twelve to twenty-five centuries before our oldest Hebrew manuscripts were copied. Upon that line of battle fundamentalism elects to make its last stand. Not to the masses of trusting Christians who are easily fooled and satisfied by declaring their English Bible to be infallible; not to the rank and file of inquiring students and clergy who are sufficiently impressed by citations from the Hebrew and Greek; but for the determined and remorseless scholars who admit the impregnability of no position that assault can demolish, conservatism digs itself in on the infallible autographs.

There the matter ends in smoke and mist. No one can attack a non-existent fortification. The autographs are nowhere; no man living can prove what was in them, and no man dead has left us any record of what they were like when he read them. The people who condemn philosophy for its assumptions, assume that the original autographs were absolutely in accord with eternal truth, to the last jot and tittle. The foes of evolution, because they call it a guess, guess that infinite perfection dwelt in the lost autographs from alpha to omega. To question what they say, to deny anything so

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self-evident as the proposition that our Bible originally existed in complete and flawless accord with all truth, is to proclaim oneself hopelessly lost in hardness of heart and contumacy of mind. What could be more fair?

To admit the need of perfect autographs is to surrender the whole claim of infallibility. All we have is our existing Bible. If it needed to be inerrant, why did God allow it to become errant after having gone to the trouble of getting it all miraculously written out without error? If our salvation depends upon implicit obedience to an infallible revelation, what does God mean by letting the record get corrupt? In vain all the miracles of creation and redemption, in vain the providential dealings with Israel, in vain the life and death of Christ. We are without the perfect autograph record of all this, and must therefore perish. It will not do to answer that what we have is sufficient to make us wise unto salvation even in its faulty state. If that is so, why not leave the hypothetical autographs out of it altogether?

In sober honesty there is no probability that the autographs would excel what we have. Textual criticism assures us that, despite all the changes from the original, we now have substantially what was originally in the Bible. Literary and historical criticism traces the documents back to their probable dates, and indicates when and how the existing books were made. There is a faithful reflection of the progress of ethical and spiritual ideals from age to age. Where there is discrepancy, or con-

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flict, or ignorance, or imperfection, it is what would be anticipated from the writers, in the nature of the case. There is no more ground for guessing at a flawless original Bible than for assuming a perfect original world. Fundamentalism does both, having the whole creation marred in Aadm's fall, and the Bible corrupted in transmission.

Among all the amazements of fundamentalist inconsistencies there is nothing more astounding than their commitment to a Bible upon a dead level of perfection. They claim to be the only true followers of Christ left on earth. Yet the New Testament position, especially in Hebrews, is that the Old Testament was faulty, partial, and, like other old and worn things, ready to vanish away. That one can be a Christian in the New Testament sense, and yet regard the Old Testament as of permanent and final authority is impossible. Christ used it as we ought to use it, as a wonderful record of God's dealings with Israel. He is constantly cited by conservatives as proving all sorts of things about the Jewish Bible—the authorship of the Pentateuch, the integrity of the Book of Isaiah, and the historicity of Jonah and Daniel. Such questions have nothing to do with religion, so he had no reason to think of them, any more than he had to settle the order and process of creation, or the relative size of all the seeds in the world. He reflected the ideas of his hearers and his age.

But when it came to spiritual concerns, note his attitude. Was all the old Bible equally good from

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cover to cover? Not if we may judge of it by the books and passages he quoted for his own soul's needs. Was it all equally binding upon men? Not if we estimate it from his attitude toward all its vast priestly and ceremonial element. Was it all the perfect Word of God that could not be broken and would never pass away? Not if he said of one Mosaic law that it was due entirely to men's hard-heartedness in dealing with their wives, and contravened a fundamental, divine law of marriage. Not if he set his requirements as to lust and hate and murder over against the Law of Moses. Did he pass approving judgments upon its moral and spiritual standards? Not if he rebuked his apostles for wanting to call down fire from heaven as Elijah did upon his opposers. Not if he put forgiving love in the place of the primitive brutality of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Not if he replaced the indescribable hate and curses of the vindictive Psalms with his principle of rendering blessing for curses and praying for spiteful use.

Manifestly Christ knew nothing of a Bible perfect in all its parts. Beyond reasonable question, he laid upon his followers the obligation of rejecting everything in Scripture that was out of harmony with reason and conscience. It cannot be unchristian for men to follow the example of Christ, feeding their souls upon the meat of the Bible while rejecting the husks. The straightforward thing to do is to make spiritual use of the Bible as it is, and not try to reverse Christ and

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shame the church by claiming plenary infallibility either for the book that exists, or for the autographs that have perished.





## CHAPTER VIII

### NO FAIR VERBAL INSPIRATION

Inspiration and infallibility as applied to the Bible are used synonymously in popular speech. Every word of Scripture is considered infallible because it is believed that every word is inspired. Inspiration is the process whereby the divine omniscience saw to it that men wrote every word in the Bible as errorless in every detail as though the all-wise God had himself penned it. We have already seen that some concessions may be made as to our existing Bibles, but for all practical purposes a Bible is a Bible, and it is the product of no man's mind, but of God's.

As carried on, fundamentalist controversy has no point whatever unless the Bible is wholly God's, and, in no particular, man's. If Hebrew men, however great and wise, had anything to do with the creation story, no fundamentalist would expect it to give any reliable information. It would then be granted that only the unscientific notions of a distant age, and not the scientific knowledge of modern times, could be reflected in it. The story is accepted and defended, not because it is a fine piece of literature, not because it follows a logical and reasonable order, not because it can be twisted into a sort of harmony with accepted astronomical

and geological facts. It might violate every one of these particulars—as indeed the story in the second chapter does violate them all save the first—and be defended as the truth none the less. It is accepted as absolute truth because it is in the Bible, and the Bible is regarded as coming directly from the all-knowing God who could not possibly make a mistake in telling exactly how he created the universe.

As to just how God brought about the writings of this literature free from any taint of human half truth or error, there may be some difference among fundamentalists. But that is held as immaterial, the result is what counts. It might have been as mechanical as when a mother holds a pencil in an infant's hand and writes to the absent father. Or perhaps it was as when a man dictates to his stenographer; or the utterances of a subject under control of a hypnotist. Anyway, what is insisted upon by fundamentalism is a record as absolutely perfect as though God used one or all those processes in recording his revelation. Whether so stated or not, it means literal, verbal inspiration.

When asked to accept every word of the Bible as the end of all controversy on any subject it touches—scientific, historical, linguistic, moral, and religious—the world has a right to inquire when such a theory of inspiration arose, and what evidences support it. As to the when, it is safe to assert that in its present form and implications it is a product of the Protestant Reformation, and, as such, cannot go back of the sixteenth century.

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Prior to that time the Bible was not the sole authority and final court of appeal for the church. The voice of the church itself, as the living vehicle for conveying God's will to men, was the final authority. Cut adrift from such external control in a world unfitted for self-control, Protestantism sought a substitute and found it in the Bible to which it had already appealed as against the voice of Rome. Hence it proclaimed the Bible, and the Bible alone, as its rule of faith and practice. Its early confessions of faith set forth in detail its belief that every word, and even the very pointings of the words of the original, were inspired.

How little that was the unbroken tradition of the church is clear enough. To support its contention that the Bible is no sufficient rule of faith and practice, the Catholics laid hold on everything that would tend to undermine the authority of Scripture alone. The Hebrew Old Testament had been for centuries in the hands of infidels, the Jews. The Greek New Testament had for centuries been in the hands of schismatics, the Greek Catholics. Why appeal to such as against the sacred Latin Bible as interpreted by holy church? When it was discovered that the Old Testament was written and for centuries preserved in Hebrew shorthand without any vowel letters, the Protestants resisted the discovery and wanted it suppressed because of its damaging effect on verbal inspiration. But the Catholics eagerly welcomed and proclaimed it. When the Samaritan Pentateuch was brought to the knowledge of Christendom its many variations

from the Hebrew, whose oldest manuscripts were fifteen centuries younger than the original Samaritan Bible, led the Catholics to use it to discredit the Protestant Bible and theory of inspiration.

For a theory so late, why attempt to claim universal reverence? True, the Protestant church repudiates its parentage, but it is not possible to start anew sixteen centuries after the origin of an organization, and both blot out those centuries and at the same time claim the support of antiquity. It is easy enough to prove that the ancient church, and the New Testament regarded the Scriptures as inspired, but that is a very different matter from the Protestant theory of verbal inspiration. Fundamentalists are flying in the face of history, and playing fast and loose with the meaning of words when they claim their notion of the Bible is according to the ancient faith of the church. It is a late invention from which revolts in the Protestant ranks began early and will continue until the theory yields to truth.

Looking for the evidences in support of such a theory we find none. Our consideration of infallibility revealed the fact that the original manuscripts containing the very words of God disappeared centuries ago. We are ruined and undone if our salvation and our knowledge depend upon the very words God dictated. Nor in such copies of the sacred book as have come down to us do we find verbal agreement. Lay the New Testament quotations from the Old side by side with their original, and you will see verbal differences, not in-

frequently changing the meaning of the passages. They are loosely quoted, evidently from memory, and not very good memory as to either sound or sense. Or take such allusions to Old Testament events as that of Jesus to Jonah. The original account says a great fish swallowed Jonah; Jesus says he was in the belly of a whale. If one is right the other is wrong. The words differ, to the confusion of verbal inspiration, and the statements are irreconcilable. If it was a whale, it was not a fish. The matter is inconsequential upon any reasonable view of the Bible. Upon the fundamentalist view that the Bible is the absolute statement of God, free from any error, the matter becomes a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. If God does not know the difference between a fish and a whale it is senseless to maintain a book he wrote will be free from scientific error. If he knew better but accommodated his language to popular conceptions, then we can say the same for Genesis and let the scientist tell us what God really meant. Either way, verbal inspiration is ruined.

Turning to the reports of Christ's sayings in the four Gospels, to a comparison of the accounts of the resurrection, or Luke's account in Acts of the council Paul reports in Galatians, you again wreck the theory. Verbal agreements were nothing to these writers. Contradictions and difficulties bristle everywhere that parallel accounts appear. Facts differ and words differ, and therefore meanings differ. It almost looks as though the divine purpose in these duplications abounding in the Old

and New Testaments were to put the reader upon notice not to look for verbal agreements or infallible statements in the Bible. What wonder, then, that upon laying the Bible down beside the revelation of God in his world we find further contradictions!

Upon the assumption of Christianity in general, the Bible is a lone book without another of its class in the world. It claims, here and there, that it is inspired, or that God told men what they have recorded in it. To learn what is meant by such claims we should study its pages to find out just what an inspired book is like. It is futile to make up our minds what an inspired book should be like, and then turn to the Bible to see whether it has such characteristics. That is what theologians do with God—decide what his attributes should be, and then proclaim that God is a being with those attributes. As no one ever meets God and examines him as to the presence or absence of such characteristics, the theologian cannot be checked up. But when it is asserted that the Bible is inspired because of its possession of certain qualities, we do meet the Bible, and can check up. We have seen how the theory splits upon the rocks of all sorts of facts.

The hypothesis of the fundamentalist is that God is perfect, and, therefore, a book inspired—that is, made by the Lord himself—will also be perfect. Even without opening the Bible to see what it says of itself, it should have been apparent that such a hypothesis would likely prove to be false. God made the world, yet its imperfections

constitute one of the most serious obstacles to faith in an all-wise, beneficent God. The Bible says David was a man after God's own heart. It might reasonably be inferred that such a man would be like the perfect God. But he was actually such a man, in spite of many admirable qualities, as would certainly end in prison or on the gallows in any civilized state in the world to-day. The church and the family are regarded as divine institutions upon scriptural authority. Nevertheless their history has been a record of the worst and the best of which humanity is capable.

If it be rejoined that God made all the things perfect, and saw that they were very good, but the Devil entered into and spoiled them, that helps nothing. If we have or know all these as imperfect why may not the Bible also be imperfect, despite its divine origin? If the Devil spoiled the world, and David, and the church, and the family, why may he not have spoiled the Bible, too? If God could not, or did not see fit to keep the Devil out of the church, how can it be known that he kept him out of the church's Bible? In point of fact, when the orthodox flee to the original autographs as the only infallible Bible, do they not confess that the Devil spoiled the existing, imperfect Bible?

Fit the theory to the facts. Let the Bible tell exactly what it is like by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and all with the world, and every solid conclusion of reason. It will be found imperfect when tested by our best standards, like all other divine things. But like other good things given us

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of God, it will be found to serve our needs and lead us to God. All Scripture is God inspired, and is serviceable for training in righteousness. But it is of no use in teaching science. The notion that it is inspired unto perfection in all earthly knowledge is not what it says of itself, and not what the church universal has ever believed. It is foul play for any sect or party to teach falsehood about the Bible, and demand that all Christians accept it.





## CHAPTER IX

### NO FAIR RESTRICTING CHRISTIANITY TO THE IGNORANT

At the outset Christianity won its adherents largely from the masses. Jesus and all his apostles were of the common people. Even after the movement began to spread abroad, and had as its chief missionary a man of specialized training, it remained true that not many wise were called. Like all other movements requiring radical social and spiritual readjustments and sacrifices, it was impossible for it to claim the well-placed and self-satisfied. Only in the rarest cases will a man of settled convictions and assured position, like Saul of Tarsus, count everything but loss for the sake of any new religion.

But in the long run a religion is doomed that cannot command the support of brains. It may convert only a few intellectuals, but their powers of leadership will grow from the best elements of the masses of converts a larger number. In the early centuries, and later in missionary work among civilized peoples, it has always proved true that Christians have had far above their proportion of the educated classes. Nevertheless it must always remain true that the masses of Christians, like all other masses, must remain relatively ignorant. As

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compared with the first generation of Christians they may be well educated. But by the side of the highly educated of their own or of other societies, they must be as babes in intelligence.

It is sheer arrogance of learning to attempt to put Christian doctrine beyond the comprehension of the masses. All the accompaniments of teaching and accessories of Christian life must be within the reach and capacity of the plain people. Sunday school pictures and music are not to be banned because they violate all canons of art. Church services and preaching are not to be scorned because aesthetically and intellectually they cause pain to the refined and cultured. Simplicity, even crudity, with the rational element in the background and the emotional element in the forefront, must be the order in any popular movement. Even to keep the Bible in the noble English of the Elizabethan period is undoubtedly to violate the simplicity of the gospel. To hear and read the word of God in the current speech of the mother tongue of their own day is the right of the people.

Having said thus much, it must, however, immediately be added that to forbid conveying Christian truth and life to the cultured intellectuals in speech and forms congenial to them is the arrogance of ignorance. That attitude in the early centuries would have doomed Christianity to defeat as a world religion. Without Paul, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Augustine, and Origen, the Galilean fishermen and their successors would have made sorry business of converting the Roman Empire. By the

fourth and following centuries the effort to tell what Christ and Paul meant in terms congenial to Greek and Latin philosophy brought forth the historic creeds. In the sixteenth century a new world situation required a restatement of faith in the Reformation confessions. None of that was demanded by the masses. Except as it was later adapted to their understanding in simple speech and picture wording, it did violence to their honesty to require them to declare they believed it. But without it, probably neither they nor their intellectual superiors would have remained Christian at all.

The present fundamentalist attitude is essentially a refusal to allow modern scholarship to do for this generation what was done for earlier generations. It is an effort to make Christianity and ignorance synonymous terms. Not that every fundamentalist is ignorant, but many of them are. A survey of American Christianity would undoubtedly show that fundamentalism is strongest in the denominations where standards of education for admission to the ministry are lowest. In other denominations its chief advocates are generally the ministers entering service irregularly from business or professional life. Or they are men debarred by age or environment from keeping in touch with modern culture. Their great training camps are not colleges nor theological seminaries. Years ago they gave up all hope of universities, but clung to the fond hope that in church colleges young men might be kept ignorant enough to qualify for the ministry. Still

later they thought theological seminaries might send out blind leaders of the blind if they could be kept under intimidation. But that plan failed because young men sufficiently educated to enter a respectable seminary were too far advanced in education to care to be preachers of ignorance. Now they are herded from the common schools into Bible Institutes where zeal takes the place of study, and such knowledge of any subject as their untrained minds meet is so sterilized as to leave ignorance undisturbed.

The leaders of fundamentalism not thus far accounted for may be very learned men. Being few in number among the apostles of ignorance they are the more conspicuous. Whatever their erudition, they elect to keep their Christianity insulated from all else they know. Their ignorance is wilful. Even as modern medicine makes serums by killing organisms and injecting them into the blood so that living organisms of the same kind will be slain when entering the same blood, so these men slay ideas before admitting them to their minds, and thus inoculate themselves against the admission of modern thought. The existence of knowledge is not unknown to them. They can speak of it and quote its words. But they will not to assimilate it. Only as a serum to inoculate themselves and others against the admission of living ideas have they any use for present day thought.

It is all as though Jerusalem had succeeded in proving Paul not a Christian because he put his gospel into more advanced thought. Or as if Rome

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had succeeded in putting beyond the circle of Christianity all the reformers. The present conflict is only the struggle between conservatism and progressivism. For its ancient prophets fundamentalism is ready to erect monuments. But the living prophets must be cast out and stoned. Yet by such methods Christianity itself would long ago have been slain. Only insofar as it remains alive to adapt itself anew to its environment in every age can it succeed. What it has been may be beautiful enough, but a living being is more valuable than the most gorgeous mummy ever exhumed from the tombs of Egypt.

John had a right to commend Christianity to his age by using the old heathen ideas about the *logos*. Paul had a right to cast the gospel into the legalistic phraseology made familiar everywhere by the government and courts of Rome. The Nicene Fathers had a right to try to express in Greek thought the relations between Father, Son and Spirit. The church had a right to take the pagan festivals of the winter and spring solstices and turn them into Christmas and Easter. Modern Christians have the right to put the religion of to-day into the phraseology of current philosophy and science.

What does liberalism propose so alien to Christianity even as now held by fundamentalism, as the *logos* doctrine was to Jewish Messianic thought? Can any modernist do more violence to our religion than the legalistic terminology of Paul did to the free spiritual religion of Jesus? Is any present

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summary of faith in a jargon so incomprehensible to simple Christians as the Nicene Creed was when made, and has increasingly become with passing centuries? Will ever the church be called upon to absorb again and transform into Christian purity such wild pagan error and filth as inhered in the festivals of Christmas and Easter?

To defend all that ancient adaptation as against modern developments is folly. Nothing in it was essential or permanent. Forcing it upon men now because it was once useful or valid is ignorance, no matter how learnedly urged. Ancient good cannot but become uncouth. We now need our own adaptations in our own terminology. If they prove useless in coming generations that is only what has always happened. God grant that by that time they shall not have assumed such sanctity as to be used to discourage new advances in science and religion.

In no age or country was it ever more dangerous to Christianity to arouse prejudice and ignorance in its behalf than now and here. Elsewhere the right of leadership has generally been conceded to the learned. There has been high respect for specialists and scholars. Hence the terrible mass weight of the arrogance of ignorance has seldom stood long in the way of progress. Even in democratic America affairs were formerly left to representatives who were usually men of light and leading. Now the tendency is to absolute democracy, with the people presuming to settle everything directly. Old systems of checks and balances, the delegation of

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power to leaders, and the impossibility of acting quickly upon impulse and passion are all being swept away. Direct election of all servants of the state, including judges, the recall of any not reflecting the mood of the people, the initiative and referendum, all this is bound to be very terrible where prejudice and ignorance control. It is by no means uncommon for any man specially trained for some responsible position to be defeated because of distrust of theorists and specialists by the masses. In many districts candidates for the legislature and congress easily beat educated opponents by claiming to represent the average ignorance of their constituents.

Fundamentalism has allied itself with this spirit; perhaps has been created by it. Where it has secured the passage of laws against teaching anything it conceives to be detrimental to Christianity, and where it has tried, but failed, to pass such laws, it has done so by popular appeal to prejudice and ignorance. Where it controls teaching through pressure put upon governors and state school boards, it is by the same means. The voice of the people is assumed to be the voice of God. The majority speaks, and the rights of minorities disappear. What was right yesterday is wrong to-day because the people have voted it so. What is true to-day is false to-morrow because the legislature has passed a bill, effective after midnight, declaring it not a fact. What experts say or specialists testify is of no avail; they are biased and unbelieving. The people know what is true, just as they once

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knew the earth was flat and stationary because they did not fall off; that the sun moved across the heavens because they saw it go; that they got malaria, not from a germ, insect-carried, but from breathing night air.

Ultimately the force conservative religion has called to its aid will destroy it. Meantime it will alienate from itself all those who will to know the truth. If reached by liberal preaching and teaching such may be saved to Christianity. Otherwise the fundamentalists will carry it unanimously that religion and ignorance are one and inseparable, now and forever.





## CHAPTER X

### NO FAIR SUBSTITUTING A HEATHEN GOD FOR THE CHRISTIAN GOD

For heathens to present their conception of their gods is fair enough. For anybody to set forth the conceptions of God held by the ancient Hindus, or Greeks, or Hebrews, is open to no objection. To trace to their origins any elements entering into the Christian God is above criticism. But to put any or all of these concepts in the place of the distinctively Christian view of God as taught by Christ, or properly deduced from his teaching, is foul play.

Such things are done in the name of Christianity. They have been crystallized in the creeds of the past. They lie back of laws and prohibitions of the present. They are loudly proclaimed by sensational evangelists and professional converters. They have to be supported by fundamentalists and other advocates of a dead level of perfection in an infallible Bible. Whenever such things are done it is likely to be with the attempt to deny that those who do not acquiesce have a right to be considered Christian. Examples of such unchristian views of God may be noted under each of the heads set down in this paragraph.

Take the fundamentalists first. They are com-

mitted to defending as a necessary part of Christianity everything that their infallible Bible attributes to God. To them it is impossible to hold that Old Testament ideas of God were often imperfect and erroneous. They can admit that anything about God not revealed in the Old Testament could be reserved for the New, that the old ideas were incomplete. But they cannot admit that conceptions of God in a barbarous age were false as set forth in Scripture. What the Old Testament said God was or did, and the motives and reasons he had for doing things, the fundamentalist must accept as absolutely true. When God was angry with Israel and prompted David to make a census of the people so he would have an excuse for wreaking his wrath upon the king, he did so by destroying seventy thousand of the people. The account in Samuel says God tempted David to do it. That was before Jewish theology had invented the Devil. As Isaiah put it, God did everything, created darkness as well as light, and did evil as well as good. When Chronicles was written centuries later, the inspired writer had no such notion of a verbally inerrant Bible as the fundamentalists have. Hence he boldly changed the record and said Satan did the tempting. But in either case and in many others showing God cruel and vindictive, we have a picture of God so alien to Christ's teaching that it is unfair to hold it as a part of Christian faith.

Take evangelical evangelism. It holds essentially with fundamentalism. But it stresses certain

conceptions of God that are useful in getting people into the big tent and making them hit the sawdust trail in large numbers. God is therefore represented as bound by a terrible law to send everybody who does not accept the evangelists' idea of the death of Jesus to an eternal hell. The idea is that God was bound by another terrible law making it impossible for him to forgive and save anyone until Jesus was sacrificed to remove from everybody the guilt of original sin brought about by Adam's fall. The simple and intelligible language of the New Testament which uses such figures and illustrations as lie at the basis of this preaching is violently distorted. It is held to be literally true that God demanded the slaughter of his innocent Son before he would for a moment consider letting anyone escape everlasting damnation.

That is a good heathen idea of God, but it is not a Hebrew concept, still less a Christian one. It is insistently declared to be the teaching of all Old Testament sacrifice. If that were true there is no good reason for counting it a permanent part of religion. All the most spiritual Old Testament teachers, such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, indignantly branded all sacrifices as harmful to religion, hurtful to men, and hateful to God. Respecting the very time that the Law of Moses represents God as circumstantially instituting all the sacrifices, the prophets declare he never instituted or desired them. As a thing existing in spite of God, because of the hardness of human hearts, they are reckoned with in the New Testament in trying

to impress the value of Christ upon men. But take them at the full face value put upon them by unspiritual priests, sacrifices are not represented, even in the Law, as the basis of God's forgiveness. They attended to various ceremonial and inadvertent lapses. Often they were to set right what would seem to us mere breaches of etiquette, such as eating pie with a knife.

How then does the Old Testament represent God as dealing with an actual sinner who presumptuously transgressed the eternal principles of right and truth? Necessarily the divine holiness reacted against such a one. Between God and him there could be no peace or fellowship. Nothing was said of Adam's fall as entailing damnation upon men. Where in Scripture is anything ever said of it save in a couple of Pauline illustrations that Calvinism has put upon all fours? But of the man's own actual sin it is represented that confession and penitence brought God's pardon. It was as simple as for a father to forgive his erring child, with never a hint of pardon having to wait until another child, guiltless of any offense, could be sacrificed as a voluntary atonement. And the teaching of Christ is to the same effect. When the Prodigal returned the father did not have to slay either the fatted calf or the elder son before he could forgive and reinstate the penitent boy. Great faith, though in a heathen Roman, won the blessing of God; or in a Phoenician, or in a dying, penitent robber.

To all who know the constraining power of love in its extreme offering, to all won by that love to

lives of devotion to God, to all heartened for self-denial by the conviction that in Christ's cross we find assurance that God himself is pledged to self-sacrifice until he shall see of the travail of his soul in the redemption of his children and be satisfied—to all such there is understanding of the ransom for many in the death of Jesus. The Christian God has no favor for sale. As of old, he requires nought but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him. The God of current evangelism is a heathen survival. Whoever else has preached him, Christ never did. When God is enslaved by any inexorable law which eternally damns everybody who does not believe that he had to slay his Son before he could forgive the penitent, then there will be no God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ left in the universe.

Next take the God of those who are making people religious by act of legislature. The ends they have in view may be very laudable. To know the Bible, to honor Christ, to reverence God, to forsake evil and cleave to good are things for lack of which the world is in sore straits. But when did it become possible to legislate such things into people? Or when did the Christian God ever attempt to force men into his service, or authorize others to try it? When tried, has it not proved a wretched failure at best, and a bloodthirsty, torturing horror at worst? Was it fair to do to the Jews what the church dared do in the name of Christ for centuries? Was it Christian, what the

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Inquisition did to heretics? Anyway, what did it accomplish?

Nowadays when a teacher is punished for violating laws forbidding the teaching of science, or commanding the daily reading of the Bible, our modern protectors of God cry out in amazement when charged with persecuting. They say all is now being done according to regular legal process before properly constituted courts to uphold statutes duly enacted by state legislatures. Do they fancy that persecutions in the past were without due process of law? The slaughter of the early Christians for not worshipping the emperor was done under the Roman law, by sentence of its courts, and at the hands of its legal officers. Back of all the fires of Smithfield in the reign of Bloody Mary there were the regularly enacted laws of the British parliament. It has always been so when majorities have dared speak for God. They do not have to proceed without law, though along with it the general spirit of intolerance commonly raises up some mob or secret organization to add lawless to lawful violence. The God who is afraid to permit academic freedom and liberty of speech is not the Christian God, nor is the God of coercion and persecution. Religion forced or hypocritically pretended may satisfy some jungle divinity, but it is meaningless to Christianity.

Finally, take a creedal caricature of the Christian God. One would fain believe that no denomination to-day would stand for the extreme Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation.

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Of course it is in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and that is still subscribed to by churches. But the day of taking such adherence to out-worn creeds seriously has passed for most people. Nevertheless a book is at hand, written by a learned seminary professor, and both delivered as lectures and printed by denominational authority, wherein the God of the Westminster divines stands forth. The book is recent enough to bid for popularity by a title claiming that the reader may apply within to learn just what God thinks of evolution. In the main, it treats of total depravity and predestination. All men richly deserve to be everlastingly damned because they were present in the person of Adam when the first sin was committed. Untold millions of them who were elected to be born where they could not possibly hear the gospel have been thus deservedly damned. But a great multitude were predestined to eternal life by improving their opportunity to believe the Calvinistic doctrine of the relation of Christ's sacrifice to salvation. After the rigors of the old theology which had its many infants, not a span long, in hell, it is a sign of real evolution to find here the belief that all infants dying in infancy are saved. But the head and front of this offending against a good Christian God is in the reason given for letting anybody be saved at all. They are saved not because they merit it; Adam spoiled all that in the year 4004 B. C., the memorable year when God devoted a week to the creation of the entire universe. They are not saved in order that they might be holy and

happy; that is only incidental. They are saved for the purpose of displaying to principalities and powers God's glory. What could be more Christ-like than such a God? For what higher purpose could God have created man, damning most, but saving many, than for the selfishness of getting glory from principalities and powers?

Is it asking too much when it is requested that such conceptions of God be not charged to Jesus Christ? If so, may it not at least be asked that those holding different conceptions be not branded as anti-christian? We do not ask that any legislature shall outlaw these heathen gods of our neighbors, nor prevent their writing and talking about them. We do not even say that those holding such views of God may not be estimable Christian people, for life abounds in strange contradictions. But we must insist that under the rules of the game we think it unfair to mix gods in such wise.





## CHAPTER XI

### WHAT IF IT IS NO FAIR?

Such violations of fair play as have been noticed might be greatly multiplied without exhausting the list. But in reflecting upon the matter, it seems as though religious people are inclined to dismiss the charge of foul play with a shrug and a sneer. What of it? We shall play as we please. In the end, however, it is the church that is debarred from the game by unfairness.

The church has always lost in the battle with science. Look through any record of the conflict between theology and science and it is made clear that science has always won because theology has always been wrong. The classical case is the opposition to the Copernican system of Astronomy. It was made dramatic by Galileo. Everybody knows about it. Nobody denies either the truth of what Galileo stood for or the error of what the church upheld. Yet where will you find that the church ever confessed its sins in that matter, or ever asked the pardon of science? A shocking wrong was done to individuals, and a grievous sin was committed against truth. Yet the institution that is supposed to be the pillar and ground of the truth, and that exists to condemn sin and call sinners to confession and repentance, has never cleared its

record. Never mind about that, it says in effect, we are too busy resisting the science of to-day to say anything about the conflicts of yesterday.

The story has been repeated in the history of other sciences. Geology and Biology have been fought and have won. Just now the battle is about organic evolution. It offers a fine field. The Bible is set against it. Wrathful prejudice is stirred up by telling people that their mothers are insulted by teaching they had monkey blood in their veins. The hypothesis is highly technical and easily derided by ignorance. Such proofs as it has are not demonstrable, but only probable. But if bigotry wins the battle it will be the first time. Skirmishes may be won. Scientists are constantly abandoning positions which are found untenable. They are always modifying their theories to harmonize with facts. Theology never drives science out, it only shouts when science moves from a weak to a stronger position. Theology is always resisting the modification of its theories, which seldom have any facts to embarrass them. If it has to abandon its positions, it does so behind smoke screens, and then loudly declares it was always just where found after the smoke blows away. Can that commend the church to the fair-minded?

Unfairness about the Bible is worse than opposition to science. The scientists take care of their field, but only religionists can take care of the Bible. Falsehoods against science may arise from ignorance and that an ignorance excusable if not accompanied by pretensions to knowledge. But the Bible is the

specialty of religious people, and what they say of it ought to be dependable. Certainly those who proclaim themselves its true interpreters and defenders against all enemies in and out of the church ought to tell the truth about the Bible. That they never tell the truth when their theories require false supports is notorious.

Here, for instance, is the official organ of the Bible League of North America, just from the press, a month before the date it carries. What are the latest fundamentalist assertions respecting the Bible? That it can be confidently asserted that not a single statement of Scripture has ever been proved erroneous—not a single demonstrated fact of natural science contradicts any statement of the Bible. If that language has any meaning, it clearly proclaims the learned editor who wrote it incapable of telling the truth. Does not the Bible state that the sun stood still at the command of Joshua. Is it not a demonstrated fact of natural science that the sun always stands still relative to the earth? Therefore the Bible contradicts science, and the editor knows that he was not telling the truth, no matter how much dust he may throw in the air about the language of Scripture being accommodated to the understanding of the people of Joshua's day. Do not the remains of the civilizations of the Nile and Tigris valleys antedate the time of Noah's flood, and the creation of Adam? Hence the Bible is proved erroneous upon those facts of Archeology. Is not the statement of Daniel that Babylon was conquered by Darius the Mede false in the face of

the correct statement in Isaiah that Cyrus the Persian was the conqueror? Does not Daniel also unequivocally state that Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon? Whereas history shows he was never king, and Nabuniad was the last Babylonian king. Is it not demonstrable that the name of the Babylonian conqueror of Judah is commonly misspelled in the Bible? What chance have the Bible, truth, the church at the hands of religionists who will not play fair?

It looks almost as though the church has devoted itself to special pleading for so long that it has lost the power to face facts and reach honest conclusions. Hopelessly split up for centuries into sects that cannot agree as to the validity of what their rivals teach as the very truth of God, how can they recognize the proof of anything they do not want to be true? Take the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism as still maintained by Presbyterians and Methodists. Both may be wrong, but both cannot be right. Yet they go on century after century, millions of them, demonstrating their rival theories from the same Bible. Or take the Lord's Supper. To the Catholic it is the veritable flesh and blood of Christ; to the Lutheran it is bread and wine accompanied by the flesh and blood of Christ; to the Reformed churches it is the simple memorial of Christ's broken body and shed blood. All appeal to the same plain Scriptures. Each is sure the other is wrong, and in the past many a one was tortured and martyred for not agreeing with the persecutors. Or take a plain and

simple matter like baptism. Leave out all theological questions as to its function in regeneration, or its origin, or its proper subject. Consider the single matter of the mode or manner in which it was performed in New Testament times—the difference between immersionist and nonimmersionist. It is a question of fact demonstrable by an appeal to philology and history. But look at the course of the contention, the vast literature, the record of bitter strife. If anything in Scripture and history can be proved, that point can. Yet so marvelously gifted is the church in resisting the proof of anything it wants to reject, that centuries of strife have led nowhere. In almost any Bible-loving community in America families can be divided, business disrupted, and anti-evolution relegated to the rear if an able and determined evangelist will proclaim his view of baptism.

Why go on? It is the same with the matter of what the Bible means by bishops and elders, with apostolic succession, with the proper date of Easter, with Sabbath versus Sunday, with Adventism, and much more. All Christians who are one hundred percent. loyal to their denominations are trained to defend their peculiar tenets, however absurd or false, and to disbelieve the opposing teaching of other sects, however rational and true. They have never learned to play fair. Small wonder, then, that they can see neither the truths of science nor the errors of the Bible. They have been rendered morally color-blind. They are wilfully ignorant. They can know a thing and not know it at the

same time. They can follow science up to the point where it meets a prejudice and then balk. Some of them even admit the evolutionary hypothesis as applicable to all forms of plant and animal life, but deny it with respect to man. Having been bred and trained to combine against all unacceptable facts, when they combine with other sects in a kind of working union it has to be against something. The truth or falsity of what they fight is as it happens. Their methods of fighting are with reference to success, not with reference to fairness or unfairness.

Among the perils to the church from its present warfare against science and modern thought is the peril of further sectarian division. Fundamentalists are increasingly insistent that all liberalists and modernists shall withdraw or be driven out of every established denomination. Failing that, all conservatives and fundamentalists are told that they must withdraw from their unchristian brothers and begin the propagation of pure religion anew.

The prospect is appalling to any one loving the church and Christianity. There is the ancient schism between the Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches. Then there is the great gulf fixed between Catholic and Protestant. In America alone there are literally hundreds of different Protestant sects. And now it is seriously proposed by the opponents of liberalism that these hundreds be multiplied by two. For that is what it would come to. But few denominations are entirely made up of either liberals or conservatives. Exceptions would

be the Unitarians on the one side, and the Holy Rollers on the other. When the other two or three hundred sects drive out the progressives, or withdraw the conservatives, let no one suppose they will all be united in two great denominations. That might be a happy solution of the problem, but it can never be.

Whatever chance there might be of the liberals reducing the numbers of original parties amongst them, no possibility of any reduction of conservative sects is thinkable. Sectional differences between northern and southern bodies will remain. Racial divisions will abide. Historical and doctrinal loyalties will be intensified. Bigotry and contention will flourish anew. No sooner will all the Simon-pure groups of believers settle down to the enjoyment of their self-righteousness than new occasions of dispute will emerge. Having released anew upon the world all the concentrated venom of sectarianism, it will react upon every one hundred percent. pure church and rend it afresh. Having taken up the sword of strife the churches will perish by the sword.

We are told that such separation of a true Gideon's band from the faint-hearted hosts now constituting liberalism, will be the prelude to the Christian conquest of the earth. But we have heard overmuch already of a war to end war, and are disillusioned. We have read the history of Wee Frees, and Hard Shells, and bitter enders of all sorts, and know that human stubbornness and self-assurance are poor preludes to spiritual victories. Let no man

deceive himself or others. The wrath of man does not work to the glory of God.

It is tragic to hear earnest, and sometimes learned men advocating such sectarianism by the same old sophistries which have always been used when rending asunder the body of Christ. They declare that the points at issue are absolutely fundamental; that it is no question of the unessentials of opinion, but of the indispensables of faith. Liberalism is not allowed the standing of a heresy; it is not even unorthodox Christianity. Modernism and Christianity are declared to be two diametrically opposed religions. They are said to be as diverse as Greek paganism and Christianity. Indeed, anything but fundamentalism is denied the status of religion on any terms. Modernism is said to be materialistic and antisupeanatural. Yet every matter which has led to separatism in the past has been thus exalted by sectarians. Otherwise, why would serious, religious men ever have endured the strife and obloquy and loss of separating themselves from long established bodies? We look back upon these schisms now and realize how comic they would have been had they not been so serious. A sense of humor might save from the repetition of such folly if the love of Christ cannot constrain from it.

Yet when the matter is sifted, what is found at issue? Metaphysical subtleties about the attributes of God, the person of Christ, the nature of sin, and the process of salvation. Or demonstrably false theories of the plenary infallibility of Scripture, not as a guide in religion, but respecting every inconse-

quential item set down in the Bible in the course of a thousand years of ancient history. If the Bible were rejected as no indispensable guide to Christian life; if God and Christ were denied; if sin were encouraged and salvation spurned; then a serious difference would exist. But all that has developed to date is a matter of how men are to try to state in modern phraseology ancient mysteries of faith over which human minds have struggled for ages. If new content is placed in any word of Scripture or creed, dishonesty is charged. If new words and declarations of faith are uttered, it is announced that the offenders must get out and start a new sect, or remain dumb while they see the churches of their fathers and of their love disintegrating helplessly before the problems of the age. If it was wrong to split the church into fragments over matters of polity, and government, and baptism, and musical instruments and missionary societies, and buttons and bonnets, it is madness to resplit all the fragments now over incomprehensible profundities of doctrine.

If the peril of hopeless division is merely threatening the church, the calamity of reliance upon material power has already fallen upon it. As a distinguished liberal English divine has recently pointed out the lost radiance of the Christian religion is due to forsaking the spirit for the letter, the inward principle for the outward law. While the sin is possibly not confined to conservatives in religion, it most logically pertains to their position. Their view of the Bible is legalistic and literalistic to the

last degree. So also is their interpretation of the ancient creeds, of the atonement, and justification. A religion of authority and external control by a book of laws is more likely to lead to dependence upon material power than is a religion of the spirit. At any rate, there can be no question that fundamentalists are the Christians most responsible for surrendering to the law in America what properly belongs to religion. A cultured Princeton theologian may renounce such a course, and promote fundamentalism by argument and metaphysics. But a Texas "Cyclone" is said to prefer sawed-off shotguns and acts of legislature. Certainly the latter has the more dramatic appeal, and the larger following.

Among the many and increasing benefits of prohibition, there cannot be overlooked the part its advocacy has played in entangling the American church in law and politics. The organization that defeated the liquor traffic was essentially preacher originated and preacher manned. Its victory taught the preachers how to play politics and get quick results by legislation. Slow educational processes, and the task of winning a nation to sobriety through spiritual ideals and constraints were largely abandoned for law and force. Through centuries of preaching and pleading the church failed to cripple the drink business by converting saloon keepers and their customers to temperance. Then the defeat of morality and religion turned the preachers into politicians to force Caesar to do what they had not enabled Christ to do. Following the

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enactment of prohibition in states and nation they became officers of the law, detectives, law and order committees, and informers. Such, among the denominations of the South and West where fundamentalism abounds, the preachers are quite largely to-day.

Having closed the saloons by law, ministers now appeal to men to be sober, not in the name of Christ, but in the name of law and constitution. Where men fail to keep the law, the preacher is rather more likely to hunt them with guns and deliver them to jail than to pray with them and for them. The end sought being good, it is wellnigh impossible to convince ministers that the means employed might be better. A vexed problem, truly, to determine how far a preacher, as a voting citizen, is justified in entering politics to aid righteous causes. But about one matter there should be no question; to abandon persuasion for coercion is to forsake the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

From his political experience the preacher learned that a well-organized minority controlling even a small bloc of votes in a legislature can do wonders by trading votes with other groups. Members of legislature interested in some practical bill will vote for almost any moral legislation if the moral bloc will put the practical measure through. Or the result is the same when candidates know the moral forces hold a balance of power. Hence the unholy alliances in recent years between temperance people and those politically dry but personally wet. And hence the more recent

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lining up of votes to outlaw religious schools maintained by Catholics, to compel the reading of the Bible in public schools, to ban the teaching of evolution.

When these laws are passed, no matter by what political jobbery, and no matter in violation of what principles, the strength of pulpit and religious press immediately gets behind the enforcement, insisting that it is the duty of every citizen to obey every law. Than which nothing more deadly and dangerous to religion could possibly be promulgated. Deadly, because the task of the church is spiritual, and forsaking spiritual means for law and force is surrendering to the enemy. Dangerous, because the most glorious eras in religion history are those wherein the faithful laid down their lives rather than obey the laws. It is essentially to say, we have no king but Caesar, when confronted by a king and kingdom not of this world. It is to reverse the apostolic declaration about obeying God rather than man.

When the church is betrayed by its own unspiritual lack of vision into dependence upon the state, the American principle of freedom of church and state is tottering to its fall. When its ancient spiritual power to remake a world has given place to truckling cowardice hiding behind wrangling legislatures, its glory has departed. When bondage to the letter and the law are its fundamentals, the church has already been slain and must await a resurrection before it can know the spirit and the

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life. Failure to play the game fairly under the rules has brought no inconsiderable part of American Christianity to that sad plight.





## CHAPTER XII

### WHAT MIGHT RESULT FROM FAIR PLAY

If what has been written has inflicted any wounds upon religious people or the church, may it be remembered that faithful are the wounds of a friend. If it has seemed destructive it should be recalled that destruction goes before all construction. Certainly the writer can lay claim to sincere interest in religion and the church. His personal relation to both has lasted for over forty years, and, thanks to a very early beginning, he has been a preacher for thirty-nine years. During nearly all that time he has been in intimate contact with students and their problems, first as a student himself, and then as college preacher and Bible teacher. The task has been performed mainly in one of the greatest of the mid-western universities, in the greatest of the universities of India, and the greatest of the southern universities. But in occasional lectures and constant preaching it has also been performed in many colleges and churches throughout America and elsewhere. Let it then be granted that, if a life of devotion to the service of church and Bible count for anything, the writer should be numbered among the friends of church and Bible.

For the past twenty odd years it has chanced that the weeks have been devoted to teaching the

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Bible to students, and the Sundays to preaching, mainly to country people in small rural churches. During all that time it has been as easy to convey the gospel to farmer folk in harmony with modern thought as to university students. Seeking to be all things to all men has required adaptation of language to the comprehension of each group, but no compromise with either. Thence has arisen the conclusion that modern thought and criticism may greatly modify the faith of both preacher and congregation, both teacher and class, but need not destroy the faith of either. Unless somebody comes along to create alarm and accuse of heresy, such things are not thought of, nor can any difference be seen in the fruits of a ministry as between the fundamentalist and the modernist, whether they be two different preachers or one preacher of two different periods of his life.

But in contact with students it is soon demonstrated that what destroys faith and discredits the Bible is teaching and preaching in harmony with what has been denounced as No Fair in the preceding chapters. Of course not in every case, but in the vast majority of cases adherence to such things is impossible in the free air of a university. Christianity must be shown to harmonize with and live by the side of modern science and sound ethics, or it cannot live at all in the souls of the best elements of university communities. It would be as easy to preserve belief in Santa Claus in grown men and women as to preserve intact in college students faith in the things fundamentalism is in-

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sisting upon. The passing of faith in both Santa and fundamentalism may be accompanied by shock and resentment. It may even leave many where any faith at all will be spurned. But such destructive results of growth and education wrong no one.

If the church really wants to reproduce in our colleges and universities the conditions prevailing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it has only to go on with its anti-evolution, pro-infallibility fundamentalism. Again we may search the universities, and even church colleges in vain to find a single student willing to be known as a Christian. What is saving the situation now is frankness and fairness in meeting student problems. Call it liberalism, or modernism, or what you please, it is the only phase of Christianity that can speak a language intelligible and appealing to the modern educated man and woman. God knows it is hard enough to reach them even with that in a world whose boosters, and Babbitts, and prosperity, and mammon, have driven so many mad for greed and gain. Think of the pitiful plight of the church when the terms upon which it seeks ministers leave its seminaries empty of college-bred youth, and send it clamoring around the doors of Bible training schools for ministerial recruits.

Fair play will let the church recognize that no conspiracy was formed to steal all the professorships, and prominent pulpits and executive positions in missionary societies for modernists. Noth-

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ing else can live in centers of learning and in the souls of great men fitted for leadership. As well expect all the great captains of industry and commerce to be the aged business men of the past century, or the proprietors of petty village stores, as to look for venerable conservatism or complacent mediocrity in the high places of education and religion. If organizations for putting the little men in the big places succeed there will soon be no big places. The leaders should lead.

Fair play will enable all Christians to look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others. It is preposterous to brand all modern thinkers as unchristian and pagan. It can be done only by first defining Christianity in narrow and wooden terms, and then showing that modernists do not subscribe to such definitions. The Christian conception of God is thus. The true doctrine of the person of Christ is this. Atonement and salvation are that. Modernists do not understand these terms in this way. Therefore they are not Christians, and will destroy Christianity if they are not stopped from defining it in other terms.

What could be simpler? And what could be more like the most unchristian sectarianism of the past? Thus judged by the conservative churchmen of their day Paul, and Wicliffe, and Luther, and Calvin, and Tyndale, and Knox, and Wesley and Bunyan, and Roger Williams, and Campbell, and Channing, were all not Christians. If new conceptions and practices and doctrines are not to

be tolerated there is simply no way for Christianity to live. If we are to say this man does not believe in predestination, that one denies freedom of the will, the other one rejects transubstantiation, a fourth will not be immersed, a fifth will not subscribe to the Nicene creed, a sixth will not pray to the Trinity—we are back in the wilderness of sectarians where no one is admitted to be a Christian except our little circle.

How time and familiarity cure such narrowness if we are just a little fair. The writer belongs to a religious body that began by making a sharp distinction between the Old and New Testaments, the Law and the gospel. It would not subscribe to any of the creeds, not even the simple Apostles' Creed. It chose to call Bible things by Bible terms, and therefore would not mention the Trinity, nor admit to its hymn books praises to God in three persons. Hence it was long set down as Unitarian and scorned and shunned by the orthodox. Yet it recognized the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, believed in the divinity of Christ, and accepted all the established doctrines of the creeds. Without change in any of those respects, it is now recognized in the company of the orthodox, and the vast majority of its preachers and members are no doubt soundly fundamentalist. If the gentleman who writes about Christianity and Liberalism as two distinct and diametrically opposed religions had been alive a century ago, he would unquestionably have had his church Christian and mine unchristian, by many infallible proofs. If he

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could be alive a century hence he would undoubtedly regard present day liberalism as Christian, and be proving something else, then new, as nonchristian. Why not be of the spirit which can anticipate the verdict of time? Why not admit the other man may be telling the truth when he says that his conception of Christianity is, in other terms, what every man's Christianity has always essentially been?

Fair play will convince the fundamentalist that the modernist is not opposed to the supernatural, or not against what lies obscured in that word. Here and there may be found an occasional man who maintains some sort of contact with organized Christianity with no recognition of God. But that any considerable number of people pay any attention to religion after reducing the universe to a materialistic and mechanistic basis is unthinkable. Amid many differences between conservative and liberal Christians there surely must remain the common ground of faith in God. Yet the fundamentalist literature, from ignorant sermons to learned books, persists in demonstrating to the satisfaction of its writers that modernists have eliminated the supernatural.

Evidently we have another case of confused terms. As defined by a leading fundamentalist theological professor, nobody has ever truly believed in the supernatural. He reduces it largely to a matter of miracle—that is, an event caused by God without the use of means of any kind. And in order to have miracles, or departures from the

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laws of nature, he holds that there must be recognized the existence of a real order of nature from which God occasionally departs. Yet at no time at which fundamentalism believes any miracle ever occurred did there exist an established belief in fixed laws of nature. There were certain ordinary events in the common course of things to the ancients. But anything could happen to anybody or anything at any time in a fashion to make impossible belief in fixed laws of nature. Hence we have the strange circumstance that in the days when men were recording miracles there was no recognition of natural law, and in the days when there is recognition of natural law there is no occurrence of miracle. If then both belief in natural law and events apart from it are necessary to demonstrate the supernatural, it cannot be demonstrated.

Probably no modernist believes in the reality of any miracle as fundamentalism understands the term. But liberal Christians aplenty believe that every event which ever was, or ever shall be, had or shall have but one cause, namely, God. Not as deists, nor as pantheists do they conceive of God, as perversely represented by fundamentalism. God is immanent in all things, but he also transcends all things. In trying to explain the miracles attributed to Jesus upon some rational basis, they are only endeavoring to show the way God did those things. In attempting to probe the mysteries of the origin of life, the religious man is but seeking to think God's thoughts after him. If creation is represented as evolution from forces resident in

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matter, religion adds that those forces were put there by God.

Just because the liberal Christian finds the proof of theological miracles unconvincing he should not be declared void of belief in spiritual forces. The wonders of the existing universe, and the thought of its development from the beginning are, as Huxley truly put it, miracles that make those of theology mere child's play. His acceptance of the proved facts and reasonable hypotheses of scientists does not compel the Christian man to follow religio-scientific theologizing into agnosticism or atheism.

It is folly to maintain that rejection of the old two-storied idea of the universe drives God out of his world. God was upstairs in heaven, and man, downstairs on earth. From time to time God came down, as when he broke up the building of the tower of Babel to keep men from invading his upstairs. Then things were different for a while from what they were when God was upstairs. A rod would change to a snake, or an ax would come up from the bottom of a pool and float on the surface, or a man would live three days and write good poetry in the belly of a fish, or several lads would live in comfort in a burning, fiery furnace, or a great quantity of water would change to strong wine, or a handkerchief sent from one man to others would drive devils out of them. The acceptance or rejection of all of which is no evidence that a man believes or disbelieves in a God spiritually active in nature and in man.

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If the supernatural disappears by rubbing out the line between nature and God, religion has lost nothing at the hands of liberalists. Evolution does not proceed anywhere that mind touches nature without profound influence from mind. Where man is, vast areas of nature are conquered by the power of his intelligence. And to say that the liberalist ceases to be a Christian because he abandons many antique notions, and is unconvinced in the presence of much that may be true but is not proved, is to alienate friends in the struggle with materialism. The word supernatural may be abandoned or modified, but should be allowed to mark no division between those who believe in a God who worked hitherto and now works in ways beyond human comprehension, but not without convincing proof of spiritual power.

Fair play will end reliance upon coercion and force for the accomplishment of spiritual ends. The most hideous chapters in religious history have been written in blood by the light of the fires of persecution. Christianity has been no exception to other religions in that respect. No Christian denomination to-day has the right to claim that it has shed no blood but its own on account of its faith. That is true of practically all modern sects which arose after power to shed the blood of others was taken away by the state, or had withered in the tolerance of recent years. But no sect has the right to repudiate the past history of Christianity as a whole. All the blood of all the martyrs shed in the past is upon the church to-day. Humble

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confession of sins, and works meet for repentance are the duty of all Christians with regard to religious persecution.

So far from performing that duty the fundamentalists have entered upon a new course of persecution. It has cost numerous faithful teachers and preachers their positions and salaries. That often means the blood of souls, if not of bodies. Where capable and devoted men have long served churches and colleges at such financial sacrifices as that work entails, throwing them out of employment late in life, for no fault save honesty to truth as they see it, may well mean putting them and their dependents to death by slow torture. If it is replied that it is better for them to suffer physically than to leave them where their teaching may cause others to suffer eternally, the argument is startlingly like that used to justify the burning of heretics. When did churchmen ever fail to claim that their savagery was for the saving of souls?

For the present, however, we may dismiss such cases. We may also leave out of account actual physical violence done by unknown masked men to others whose faith is offensive. We have not the proof of the religious standing of the criminals, nor of the exact reasons for the violence done. Of one thing we may nevertheless rest assured—that if minorities, of Jews, or Catholics, or others, are to be oppressed and terrorized by majorities in the name of patriotism and religion, the country will be driven to religious and civil war. Nothing more dreadful has ever overtaken any country.

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Those bringing it about are religious persecutors of the worst type. Their churches can never escape the blood guiltiness of it by claiming it is done by the state.

What concerns us now is the result of fundamentalist appeals to legislatures and courts to work their will upon other people. There they are not dealing with their co-religionists through ecclesiastical bans and dismissals. They are laying hold upon the powers of the state to force their will upon others. But for the intervention of the United States Supreme Court, they would have taken from the religious schools of a whole great state the children whose parents were paying to have them taught there. Had the attempt succeeded in Oregon it would have spread to other states. If there is a majority of people in the nation bent upon such bigotry and persecution they will tear down the Supreme Court and so rebuild it that such laws will be allowed.

Even in Virginia, where Jefferson labored for complete separation of church and state, and where the most powerful religious body has always boasted of its adherence to the principle of religious liberty, a bill to force the reading of the Bible every day in every public schoolroom was narrowly defeated in the latest legislature. At this very time conventions of that same powerful denomination, and other religious bodies, are passing resolutions asking the next legislature to pass the Bible-reading bill. It is also being announced in the press that numerous secret societies are drafting

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both that bill and one on anti-evolution. What must Jefferson be thinking of Virginia citizens? And Roger Williams of the members of his household of faith? Happily the State Association of that church has just rebuked the lesser Associations advocating the passage of the Bible-reading bill by declaring unanimously against such religious tyranny.

Unless there is a speedy revival of fair play in this matter the church will suffer such shame as never before has overtaken her. By deliberate action of a whole people, when before did the church cut down such a tree of liberty as our father's planted here for the healing of the nations? When, with such light and learning, did the church ever before ban free scientific research and teaching? To force the Bible upon children, or subject them to derision for being kept away while the Bible is read in the schools supported by public taxation, is to disgrace the Bible. To forbid, by law, the teaching in schools and universities of everything a majority of voters may decide does not agree with the Bible, is to make a laughing-stock of the church.

Once the church starts such a program it will not stop short of ruin. Tennessee will justify an anti-evolution law by claiming she does not teach the Bible in public schools, and therefore ought not to teach what opposes the Bible. But Virginia will both put the Bible in and put evolution out if the present plans of its zealots are carried on to victory in its next legislature. All such states are

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arguing that they are not restricting teachers or banning teaching because everybody is left free to teach anything outside of state controlled institutions. But education having been entrusted to the state and nation, in many regions there are few or no free universities. Everywhere colleges are the creatures of the state as they derive their charters from states. They are also all partly supported by states through remission of all taxes on their real estate and endowments. Oregon has already, by a majority vote of the state, attempted to destroy all schools not tax supported. New York's *Lusk Laws* allow no teaching on any subject whatever by any individual or school without a license from the University of the State of New York. Nebraska, and other states have laws forbidding any public or private school from teaching any foreign language below the high-school grades. Other states are in for similar legislation.

Does anybody think that religious freedom can live in a land ruled by majorities when religion and patriotism have united to foster bigotry and fanaticism? The prejudice and ignorance that can compel the congress of this vast empire, and the legislatures of great sovereign commonwealths to pass such laws as those just described can do anything oppressive. Our most sacred liberties are not being violated by a single madman like Nero, who could easily be restrained or slain. We are in a land where a whole people have to go crazy to perpetrate such oppressions.

There is little comfort in the thought that the

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Supreme Court reverses the people and courts of Oregon in such matters. With the Ku Klux Klan solemnly resolving to drive out paganism, and vast religious organizations determined to put God in the constitution and their notion of the Bible in all the schools, politicians are a vain hope. If any courts have the temerity to resist, the voice of the people, which is the voice of God, will speak. Politicians and legislatures and congress will remove that obstacle to the oppression of minorities by constitutional amendment, direct election of all judges, and the recall. The beginning of all this is here. Continued agitation by the pulpit and religious press is all that is needed to speed fanaticism on to the terrible end.

Let us return to sanity before our prisons are filled with scholars who will neither cease to teach at the command of legislatures nor pay fines imposed by courts for their disregard of law. Let us turn back before the road now entered upon leads to a religious war. Come and let us reason together, was the call of God through an ancient prophet. Let us preach, teach, write, debate, talk in behalf of anything we believe. If you know no better, rant, and storm, and curse against everything you do not believe. But leave the truth free to win by spiritual means. Claiming God, and Christ, and the Bible, and nature, and reason, and time, and eternity all on your side, trust any of them or all of them to win the victory. Religion by coercion destroys itself.

Fair play will remove the charge and taint of

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dishonesty from Christianity. How far existing foul play has caused the actual taint of dishonesty to extend, God only knows. It may exist because of intellectual cowardice on the part of those who are special pleaders for God and the Bible—those who hold all their knowledge aloof from their religion, knowing the facts but resisting the conclusions. It may blight the teachers and preachers who dare not tell the truth or champion reform and freedom because they fear to lose the only employment for which they are trained. It may damn tradesmen and politicians who dread the effect of popular disfavor on dollars and votes. It may keep the multitude orthodox from dread of eternal damnation. Think what it would mean for all these to be free, checked by no threats and penalties from showing exactly what they believe and what they are. The best could then honestly go to work to make the worst better. Religion could be cleared of a large part of its sham and hypocrisy.

As for charges of dishonesty, they are most vehemently made against those who are working to liberate Christianity from this taint. To the fundamentalist the lie of all lies is for men to put new meanings into old terms; to say they believe the Bible is inspired, Christ divine, and that he died to save us from our sins, but to understand the terms in senses not acceptable to conservatism. So with atonement, vicarious sacrifice, redemption, and other words. For saying that they believe the facts that were intended to be conveyed by the

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stories of the virgin birth, bodily resurrection and personal second advent of Christ, liberalists are branded as hypocrits. Further, the right of anyone to change his views after having vowed at ordination to teach according to the Nicene Creed, the Westminster Confession, or some other authoritative document, is sternly denied.

The writer, having been free-born, untrammelled by any ordination vow not to outgrow a creed or somebody's interpretation of Scripture, has no personal experience with the moral problems of conservatives turning liberalists. But they must be similar to the difficulties confronted by a Luther, or a Wesley, and not unlike those met by Paul and by Jesus himself. Jesus remained within the Jewish church and accepted its Scriptures. But he criticized and disregarded many of the rules of his church. He set aside such parts of Scripture as conflicted with his moral and spiritual sense. He modified and put new meanings into many biblical passages. Paul, indeed, broke with the church of his fathers, but claimed he and not they had the true idea of Jewish faith and Bible. In his new religious connection he found himself at bitter variance with the original Jewish Christians. They refused to recognize his apostleship, repudiated his interpretation of the fundamentals of salvation, and charged that he made the gospel way of life easy for the sake of gain and popularity. All of which, as reflected particularly in Galatians, reads surprisingly like what fundamentalists are now saying of modernists. Forasmuch

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## RESULT FROM FAIR PLAY

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as they were the original Christians and could claim that Christ and all the pillar apostles had been as they were, they had a vastly stronger case against Paul than the conservatives have against liberals. But Paul did not get out and leave Christianity to them.

✓ Luther and Wesley desired to work within the church of their fathers, and Wesley actually did so to the day of his death. Why should they voluntarily have withdrawn and left the church of their love to those who were ruining it? Upon what constraint must the liberals do so to-day? As well might England have expected the Americans of 1776 to leave their homes and country because they were colonists bound to the British king. Reformation proceeds from within as long as possible. Revolution retains as much as it can of old holdings and advantages.

As for putting new meanings into old terms, that constantly happens with the words of any living language. The terms of theology have had no unvarying meaning to every age, nor to all men in any period. A modern physicist is not to be denied the use of "atom" because he has a different conception of it from that of the chemist of a generation ago, or the Greek philosopher of twenty-five hundred years ago. "Redemption" may still be employed, although men no longer think it means a price paid by Christ to the Devil to let men go.

Granted, that when a liberal accepts ideas lying back of such stories as the virgin birth, he should

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## *DO FUNDAMENTALISTS PLAY FAIR?*

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make it clear that the stories stand in the Bible as literal records of facts. Yet the intensest conservatism will not deny that the idea of God made manifest in humanity is the important thing in the story. An account of a virgin birth was a natural and congenial way for first century folk to set forth any belief they had in the greatness or divinity of any one. Modernism has a right to say it believes in the resurrection when it means it believes in the conscious, personal immortality of Jesus. If asked to define its use of the word it should certainly make plain its departure from the scriptural accounts of the physical resurrection of Jesus. But in all such cases it is wrong to charge liberals with deceit. They share with fundamentalists the assurance that Christ died once but is alive forevermore. Say what you please of their departure from the letter of the accounts in the Gospels. Urge the proofs of your position, and the difficulties of understanding the faith of the early church on any other theory. But do not brand as liars the men unconvinced by your proofs, and unconcerned as to what became of the physical body after the death of Jesus, although cherishing the hope that because he lives they shall live also.

When it comes down to the probabilities as to who is lying because of the strife between fundamentalist and liberal, the chances are immensely on the side of the former. The man in any church who is suspected as a liberal almost always faces a hostile majority. In most communities he stands to lose socially and financially. When he meets

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## RESULT FROM FAIR PLAY

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new ideas his impulse is to dodge them. If he faces facts he may resist the logical conclusions to be drawn from them. Often he fears the effects of revolutionary beliefs upon his children or upon society. Any position he holds as preacher or professor is jeopardized.

✓ It is easy to see that for one man who may do something equivocal as a known modernist there must be thousands who allow inertia, or ease, or social standing, or money, or cowardice, to betray them. If they are irreligious they have their own crowd and are not so likely to compromise. But if they associate with religious people and love their approval and society, the temptation to let well-enough alone and work within the limitations orthodoxy imposes, is strong. As long as any church is organized against open-minded exploration of the whole field of truth, it is exposing itself to the danger of a dishonest ministry and membership. While in any college the only way to advancement and permanence of position is through conformity to some external rule of faith and practice, mediocrity and cowardice will prostitute learning and betray youth.

The dead hand of the past has no right to dominate a living church. The will of founders and donors should not be able to stop the growth and adaptability of institutions. The letter of creeds and confessions ought to be of no avail to hinder the spirit. Nothing is more preposterous than the common fundamentalist claim that every denomination has the right to fix fast the terms upon

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which its members shall be received and live. Only if they frankly admit they are no part of the church of the living God, but just lodges and private associations, have they any such right. Churches are not private, voluntary associations. They claim to be of God and Christ. People are born and reared in them much as they are in the state. Only by breaking old ties, surrendering interests, and faring forth to unknown associations can people get out of the churches of their fathers and families. If they care to do so, well and good, let them depart. So it is in the involuntary association of the state, where we have rights and privileges that we may leave, but from which we should not be driven. Neither churches nor states can afford to live in the past, balking progress, compelling uniformity or expelling agitators and liberals. Loyalty to founders, constitutions, creeds, and leaders means trying to keep as true to great principles in our day as the fathers did in theirs. That means constant change, and adaptation, and reinterpretation.

All too few are the people in the world sincerely desiring to know and serve God according to the teaching of Christ. All of us are beset by the mystery of our world, and the difficulty of holding fast to any faith in a good God. Such a God as Christ revealed, in love and righteousness, in goodness and severity, is worthy of all acceptance. But nature and humanity are so savage and brutal in many of their manifestations that it is hard to believe that their God is also Christ's. For those

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who have attained to such faith, and are willing to back it with life and labor, their duty ought to be clear. Not by wrangling over words, not by cramming creeds down other people's throats, not by coercion and persecution is that duty to be performed. But by clean living, by spiritual freedom, by open mindedness we may help. Our differences are nothing, our agreements are all-sufficient, if only we will play fair.





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